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INQUEST ON DISASTER

MR. ATTLEE's guarded replies could do nothing to blunt the anger and dismay aroused by the painful news of the surrender of Tobruk. We have now to examine the causes and the consequences of this disaster. The loss of this place with 25,000 men is serious in itself, but its real gravity is that it serves to light up for us by a sudden flash the obscure and menacing prospect that faces us by land, air and sea in the whole of the Middle East. The immediate causes of the loss of Tobruk throw a heavy suspicion of incompetence upon the commanders on the spot. Its defences had not been prepared. Its garrison had little artillery and no air support. Such tanks as it had could be destroyed in these conditions quickly and easily. What then remained was a big force of infantry, which could not withstand the massed attack of Rommel's tanks and dive-bombers. The place should either have been abandoned betimes or prepared in advance for a stubborn defence. Neither of these courses was adopted, which argues a serious lack of foresight on the part of the commanders on the spot. What matters is not that we at home were misled by false news: it is now clear that Rommel's forces were stronger than General Auchinleck believed, and that his Intelligence Service has failed him throughout this campaign.

What concerns us now is no longer the Libyan desert, but the safety of Cairo and the Canal and our precarious position in the Mediterranean. The central fact of this situation is that thanks to the Luftwaffe based on Sicily and Crete, the Germans have a short and relatively secure sea-road, by which they can send from Genoa or Naples indefinite reinforcements of tanks, men, planes and supplies to the ports of Tripoli, Benghazi, and now of Tobruk. Malta is too heavily battered to cause them much trouble, and for months we have been unable to bomb Tripoli. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that our forces on the Egyptian frontier, depleted as they are by surrenders, casualties and the terrific punishment our tanks have endured, can make only a limited defence, so soon as Rommel is ready to push forward. At sea we have to draw the conclusions that follow from the misadventures of the two convoys which recently sought to relieve Malta. It is not too much to say that the command of the sea in the Eastern Mediterranean has passed to the German air-arm. In short, we have lost in this theatre the traditional advantages of sea-power on which we had relied. It is the enemy who can rely on a short line of sea-communications, while every ton of our supplies must traverse the 12,000-mile route round the Cape.

If we can steel ourselves to look forward a few months, we may now have to anticipate at last a serious attempt on the part of the Germans to carry out in favourable conditions the pincers movement against Suez which attracted their strategists at an earlier stage of the war. While Rommel's vastly superior force of tanks rolls forward towards Alexandria, air-borne or even sea-borne forces may operate first against Cyprus and then Syria. We must expect that our misfortunes will be reflected in the behaviour of the neutrals and non-belligerents, Spain, Vichy and Turkey. It would not be prudent to rely on a stubborn defence by the Turks of the roads that cross their territory. These possibilities, which our plight in Libya and at sea opens up to German strategists, may influence their conduct of their campaign in Russia. They may be content to hold the Red Army over the greater length of that front, while they fling a good part of their storm-troops at objectives which range from Batum to Suez and the Middle Eastern oil-fields. By this plan they might hope to cut both Britain and, more particularly, Russia off from essential oil supplies. In this alone could she be immobilised. At a suitable moment the Japanese may endeavour to join hands with them.

The strategical answer to this complicated threat calls for clear and honest thinking. If we continue to send out great reinforcements, including an entirely new force of tanks, to the Middle East, we must reckon that nothing we despatch from now onwards can arrive in less than three months. May not that be too late? Again, if we start building up a new army in that distant theatre, what becomes of the prospect of a Second Front in Europe which the statesmen of the United Nations agree in stating as our joint objective? We have dispersed our forces recklessly and stupidly in the past. After recently locking up strong reinforcements to stand passively on guard in India, ought we to risk for Suez a repetition of what happened at Singapore? We should be disposed to answer these questions by suggesting the conclusion that what is already on its way to the Middle East must suffice. At the risk of over-simplification, the main question that faces us may be: Do we prefer to have say, 50 miles of salt water between us and our land-front or 12,000 miles? Whatever may be the perils and difficulties of a Second Front in Europe, there is this to be said for it, if we stage it in France: (1) that the problem of sea transport is immeasurably eased; (2) that we could operate under an umbrella of fighters based on our own air fields; and (3) that our later types of giant bombers can be used effectively only from our own bases in this island. These arguments are equally valid whether we are timing the Continental offensive for next autumn or next spring. The European Second Front cannot be reconciled with a strategy of dispersal, and in particular it cannot be reconciled with the despatch of unlimited reinforcements to the Middle East, which must arrive too late to retrieve what has been lost.

This strategical question is by no means the only urgent problem with which this disaster confronts us. There was poor generalship, bad intelligence work and a sad lack of prevision both in Cairo and in Whitehall. But the defeat in Libya was due as certainly to poor material and ill-designed weapons. Our army suffered both from inadequate armour and inadequate fire-power. We had few tanks that came near the qualities of Rommel's. It is admitted that our former 2-pounder gun was out-ranged, but is the later 6-pounder gun satisfactory in other respects? Our anti-tank guns were too few, and they are still markedly inferior to the German dual-purpose gun, serviceable either against tanks or planes. We still have no dive-bombers, though again the Germans have proved their utility, and we still have few aircraft armed with cannon which can deal with tanks. It is futile to boast of the vast volume of American production, while experience shows that we are repeating ill-designed types by mass-production and failing to manufacture at all some of the most necessary arms. It may be that Generals Auchinleck and Ritchie have failed us, but the suspicion of obstinacy and incompetence goes higher.

Salute to Sevastopol

Sevastopol holds out with stubborn courage—a fact which adds a sting to our regrets for Tobruk. The Germans, after suffering immense losses can, however, truthfully claim some progress. They have cleared the northern shore of the broad estuary which on this side was the city's natural line of defence, but this is less serious than it sounds, since the southern shore is much the higher and offers good positions for the Russian guns. They also claim to have driven a wedge into the northern first line of defence on land, but this breach the Russians claim they have closed. Sevastopol, we should judge, has plenty of fight left in it: what is serious is that it has only one air-field left for its defending fighters, while the "Stukas" keep up an incessant bombardment. Round Kharkov thrust answers counter-thrust with no great change on balance. Meanwhile, the Russians have published their totals of a year's casualties. The losses they attribute to the enemy can only be conjectural; their own killed, wounded and missing they put at 4,500,000, though they claim that 70 per cent. of their wounded can return to the ranks. This colossal total gives some measure of their sufferings and endurance. Only a solid social structure could stand such a strain.

The Attempt to Crush Europe

Poland is notable among German occupied countries for producing no Quislings. The Nazis have tried to set up a puppet régime, using the link of diplomatic acquaintanceship. Von Moltke, the former German ambassador to Poland, approached M. Wysocki, who used to be Polish ambassador at Berlin, and offered Poland her own crops to consume, and an amnesty for some of the political prisoners, in exchange for a political body which would co-operate with and advise the German Government in the Generalitat. Wysocki conveyed the offer to the Polish underground movements, who refused it out of hand. All this happened some six months ago; and since then terrorism has been more savage and more systematic. The object is the same as that of the killings in Czechoslovakia. The Nazis are set upon hunting down any person—man, woman, or child—who shows any sign of leadership. However universal the hatred in which they are held, they believe that if the leaders are killed they can have little serious resistance to fear from the subject nations.

The Nazis are mobilising man-power with their usual thoroughness. In the west they use economic pressure to obtain workmen; in the south and east conscription. Western Poland, inside the German frontiers, has conscription for the army, and is calling up all men on the *Deutsche Volksliste*, on which they have put many thousands of Poles, in order to swell the apparent German character of the population. If people protest against being put on the list they are deported to the horrors of the Generalitat; if men refuse to serve in the army they are executed. In the Generalitat all Poles between eighteen and sixty are compelled to serve in the *Baudienst*, an auxiliary war service employed in building roads, fortifications and aerodromes.

Free France

A manifesto from General de Gaulle, addressed to three underground organisations, goes some way to meet the doubts of the French Left about his political intentions. He promises to restore the honoured motto of the Revolution, which Vichy literally erased, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and tries to give it a modern interpretation. Specifically he promises that a Constituent Assembly, elected by universal suffrage, shall draw up the constitution of a liberated France. This is interesting as a recognition of women's political rights, which the Senate had staved off during twenty years. Is this enough? A realist will object that in the inevitable interregnum, the provisional government which doles out raw materials and food and controls the press and the wireless can "make" the elections. How will it be composed? This crucial question the General leaves unanswered. Laval, meanwhile, has in an anniversary broadcast committed Vichy more deeply than ever to the Nazi New Order in Europe and to support for a German victory. He appeals to French workers to come forward for industrial service in Germany on the strength of Hitler's promise to release a prisoner of war for every civilian volunteer. Privation, which will, he predicts, increase, promises better service as a recruiting sergeant.

Realism from Gandhi

Mr. Gandhi's latest statement in *Harijan* shows that his conversations with the Pandit Nehru and Dr. Azad have moved him to a much greater degree of realism. After asking for recognition of India's right to be rid of Britain's authority, he continues:

> But I would recognise their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India to prevent a Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause between them and us. It may be necessary also for the sake of China.

In a phrase, he would tolerate and not interfere with Britain's efforts to defend India as long as Britain admitted that we were no longer the rulers of India. If Mr. Gandhi had talked like this when Sir Stafford Cripps went to India it is at least possible that his mission might have been a success. Few British people realise how much has passed in India since Sir Stafford's return. Those who wish to follow the course of Hindu-Muslim discussions, Mr. Gandhi's various changes of mind and the gradual organisation of India for war, will find a useful summary in the Union of Democratic Control's latest cyclostyled publication on India (34 Victoria Street, price 3d.). When Sir Stafford returned to this country he declared that the mission had not been a failure, and that it was still our duty to continue to search for a solution. Perhaps Mr. Gandhi's latest statement gives us another opportunity. To miss any opportunity would be to play further into the hands of the Japanese, whose propaganda based on an appeal to colour and fully utilising all the Asiatic's grievances against the white man, is now making more progress than we in this country care to admit.

Argentina and the Axis

The hopes of any effective restoration of democracy in Argentina have been dashed by the resignation of the radical President Ortiz. His blindness, which had induced him to withdraw two years ago from the active exercise of his office, is now declared to be incurable. This confirms the virtually Fascist Vice-President Castillo in power. He has recently concluded a trading deal, nominally with General Franco, by which he will barter Argentina's surplus of foods against a surplus of manufactures and machinery alleged to be Spanish. Spain has no such surplus, and is, of course, only covering a deal with Germany. But Argentina is not Hitler's only ally in this hemisphere. The news that one ship of the United Nations is being sunk by submarines every day in the Caribbean presents to our thinking rather a political than a naval problem. In which ports round this sea, French or Latin American, are the submarines supplied? The State Department is, to our thinking, much too cautious and partial in its dealings with Vichy's colony of Martinique. That island should long ago have been occupied, like Madagascar.

Home Front (*by an Industrial Correspondent*)

The Amalgamated Engineering Union is twice over in the news, first with its report on what is right and wrong with production, and secondly with its application for higher wages. Th wage application has plainly taken the A.E.U.' own leaders aback. Mr. Jack Tanner, th President, called the demand "a plateful" and the Union Executive has evidently no relis for the responsibility of carrying out the delegate mandate. What the engineers are asking f includes, besides a flat advance of 11s. in basi rates, an advance of one-third in the "lieu" rates paid to time workers (in "lieu" of piece work payments), a levelling up of basic rates, an a return to the working conditions which existe before 1931. The demand for 33⅓ per cen advance in the "lieu" rates is strongly reminiscent of the last war, and arises from the sam causes as the once famous 12½ per cent. advanc then granted to skilled time-workers b Mr. Churchill as Minister of Munitions. Th trouble is that, under war conditions of mass-production, the earnings of men on repetition job which can be "priced" on piecework are ap to leap far ahead of the time-rates paid to skille men whose jobs cannot be put on a piecewo basis. Very often, the sufferers are those who a most highly skilled; for the jobs which it i least easy to price or to speed up are those whic call for the greatest skill. Consequently, the mo skilled workers are apt to find men who are muc less skilled, and even dilutees, earning muc higher incomes than they can command; an naturally this leads to demands for special advanc to the skilled time-workers, and thus to general increase of wages.

* * *

The demand for an 11s. advance in basi rates raises quite different issues. It has bee the strategy of the engineering employers t grant war-time advances in wages in the form o "war-bonuses," which has the double effect th they can be left out of account in calculatin piecework prices and that, not being incorporate in standard rates, they are regarded as mor easily removeable at the end of the war. Now, i makes all the difference to the present applicatio whether the 11s. demanded is meant to be i addition to or in replacement of the war bonuse conceded already. There is a great deal to b said for consolidating a part of the war advance into the standard rate. There is less to be sai for granting a flat rate addition of 11s. to everybody's wages, leaving the war bonuses wher they stand. The calculations of the coloss sum which the A.E.U.'s demands would cos seems to be based on interpreting them in th latter scale, whereas the driving force behind them comes largely from a dislike of the "war bonus" method of conceding advances. There is plenty of room for bargaining here; and there is n need to assume that the demands, large as they are, involve the imminence of a serious labou crisis in the war industries.

* * *

The miners' wage position necessarily relate itself to that of the engineers. It was a cogen part of the miners' case that they were being pai much less than men of comparable skill employe in munition-making. and that men sent back t work in the pits were finding their earning capacity sadly cut down as a result of the change. Th advance of 2s. 6d. a shift just granted to th miners, together with an enforceable minimum wage of 83s. a week for full work, was clearly meant by the Greene Committee to lift the miner up to a position of less comparative disadvantag than they have been in hitherto. Its effort would be stultified if it were to be speedily followed by big advances to the very trades whos higher earnings prompted the miners' claim. I these trades were now to get advances which lifted them again far ahead of the miners, th inevitable sequel would be a further series o claims from the Mineworkers' Federation, an so *ad infinitum*.

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AFTER TOBRUK

The Libyan disaster cuts deeper than any previous defeat. On all former occasions we were able to derive some comfort from saying that we were not ready or that we had not had time to prepare plans or equip the troops with the most suitable weapons. On this occasion the attack that we expected in North Africa was postponed for a year by Hitler's unexpected invasion of Russia. Those who advocated a second front in Europe had been told that we were piling up tanks and the most modern equipment for the decisive defeat of Rommel. Egypt, the Prime Minister told us, was removed from all danger; after the attack began, General Auchinleck described Rommel's position as "desperate." Yet the modern equipment has proved so inadequate that most of General Ritchie's tanks seem to be lying derelict on the sands; Tobruk, which held out for months on the previous occasion, has surrendered with 25,000 men, while General Rommel, with a stronger force than our Intelligence appears to have believed him to possess at the beginning of the campaign, is pressing on to the Egyptian frontier. The most unsparing inquiry into this disaster is absolutely imperative.

Mr. Churchill, who insists always on taking full responsibility in all military matters, succeeded after his last return from America, in avoiding an inquiry into Malaya and Singapore. He had already refused any public inquiry into the loss of the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*. He had refused an inquiry into Crete, and before that into Narvik. Each time the House of Commons has accepted his assurances; each time proposals have been made for separating the functions of Prime Minister and Defence Minister, Mr. Churchill has overwhelmed or avoided his critics. This process cannot go on for ever. If the House of Commons still has any meaning in the government of this country, here is an occasion on which it must absolutely refuse to be put off by any blandishments.

On this responsible M.P.s are agreed. Their difficulty is, as usual, the position of Mr. Churchill, whose record as a strategist is disastrous, but who stands in the eyes of the world as the symbol of British unity and resistance and whose personal leadership is responsible for our present close collaboration both with the U.S.S.R. and the United States. When motions of direct attack on Mr. Churchill and the present Government are put down by Sir James Wardlaw-Milne, supported by men like Sir Herbert Williams and Commander Bowyer, when W. J. Brown and Capt. Cunningham-Reid jump in with a similar attack, the effect must be to rally the most serious and independent Members to the Government lobby. The only practical solution is to insist that this time there shall be an inquiry, and that it shall be speedy and drastic. The nation must have before it a report which can serve as the basis for judgment and an assurance that action will follow the report.

An honest inquiry is absolutely necessary to steady the feelings of the country. Without it there will be the gravest misgivings about our generals, our supplies, our strategy and the relations between the Services, and between the civil and military staffs. An honest inquiry is likely to show that all these misgivings are to some extent justified, but it will put these matters in their right perspective; it will give everyone some hope of improvement in the future. Has Britain no general who understands the use of tanks? Our inclination at the moment is to believe that General Cunningham, who was disgraced in the early stages of the last offensive in Libya, may well have understood them better than General Ritchie who succeeded him, for General Cunningham saw that once a tank offensive had begun wrong and was not likely to achieve its object swiftly, it was wiser to withdraw to our positions on the Egyptian frontier and wait for a more suitable occasion. This was sense, for there was no point in our fighting at all in Libya unless we could succeed in driving the Germans out and making it impossible for them to maintain an army in North Africa. Clearly neither General Ritchie nor his Corps Commanders had any adequate idea of what can be done with tanks. This is a specialised form of warfare, the understanding of which is not innately born in Indian cavalry officers because they have learned to play polo and have fought successfully on the North-West frontier. The little clique of Indian officers, who have so strong a hold on the British Army, have no conception of the kind of war this is. They have not understood guerilla warfare or tank warfare. Because the Chinese peasant works on the land by day and kills Japanese by night, they have imagined that he was not worth considering as a military factor; yet it is these guerilla tactics which have saved China for five years and which might still save India if they were not beneath the sublime notice of our brass-hats. In tank warfare it is cruel to pit such men against Rommel; it is incidentally criminal to the soldiers who are going to be killed and to their relatives at home. Our generals were as helpless against Rommel as the man who has just learnt the moves of chess against the man who has studied the game. This type of warfare has not constituted part of their training. Yet we have heard that there are in this country men, including General de Gaulle, who have studied tank warfare.

The inquest must go on beyond this. Is it still true that all the three Service departments resist acting under a single combined staff, that they want a victory for the Army, or the Air Force or for the Navy, as the case may be, rather than simply a victory against the Nazis? Is it true that the new American tanks as well as the British tanks, the new American guns, as well as the British guns, proved completely inferior to those used by the Germans? Has the failure of our weapons anything to do with the complaints of Professor Hill and the other eminent scientists, who were so rudely brushed aside by the Prime Minister a few months ago, when they urged that the General Staff did not make the best use of the technical knowledge at its disposal?

We could continue to enumerate the unescapable questions. Unless they are answered the hesitating neutrals on whom much may still depend, will have no trust in Britain in the future nor will our allies think us worthy of alliance, nor will either the public and the soldiers at home readily believe that the men who organised and led the attack in Libya are fit to organise and lead the Second Front which has been promised in Europe. Two hundred years ago Montesquieu wrote that when he was told that a nation was ruined by the loss of a single battle, he did not believe it. "I inquire into the general causes which led it to lose that battle." The general causes, it is clear, lie deep in our society. When the Churchill Government was formed in 1940 and there was talk of transforming this war into a People's War against Fascism, there was some apparent hope that the fundamental changes in the relations of classes, in the structure of industry and in the peace-time psychology of complacency which had dogged our steps and led us into war for twenty years since the last armistice, would be swept away. With each disaster Mr. Churchill has had a further opportunity of making these necessary changes. Even now it is not clear that he has perceived the difference between the wars of Marlborough and the desperate battle which the people of Russia are fighting against the Nazi war machine. It is very late to learn the lesson now, but there may still be time, provided that Mr. Churchill is not again allowed to persuade an uneasy House of Commons that it is too dangerous to fulfil its function as the active representative of the will of the common people of Britain.

ADVERTISED GOODS.—The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

STAR-DUST

The news from Libya would come as a less severe shock to morale if people had not been relying on the most optimistic prophecies from the Stars in the Heavens, ably supported by the star communiqué writers of Whitehall and Malet Street. Mass-astrology is, for between three and four in every ten adults, one simple expression (still growing) of frustrated hearts and hopes. Many, especially the women who have least political and theoretical education, find themselves to-day in a puzzlingly rapid word-whirling world, sometimes incomprehensible to those who left school at fourteen. There is a void of doubt and pointlessness in many minds. It waits to be fully filled. In the meanwhile, compromise, or commercialised hybrids between the modern and the mediaeval, can fill the gaps for a while—hybrids like newspaper astrology on the one hand, Fascism on the other.

Modern astrology—I am not discussing its serious theory or the sincerity of its thoughtful advocates—is a power on the public mind of 1942. Its recent growth, despite a demonstrably poor record of successful prediction, only reflects the eagerness with which ordinary people will turn to any apparent explanation of the complex personal universe. It reflects, too, the acute anxiety now widely felt about the future. By being reassuring, astrology makes each day and week a beacon for the days ahead.

People need beacons. In the past they were big, organised, institutionalised, traditional beacons. The organised, recognised institutions of to-day have failed to provide them in a manner suitable to the modern need. The complacency and conservatism of these institutions has indeed imperilled the structure of our society. Perhaps most important is the decline in the influence of the Church (beacon: heaven) dating from its disasterous acceptance of the idea that a parson should not meddle with politics, that Church and State are two separate conceptions.

To-day many allegiances are given to new developments, and the temporary ethics they engender. Jazz, astrology, Littlewood, Hollywood, Blackpool, are a few facets of commercialised, profit-motivated, short-term institutions, which can determine day-to-day attitudes and aspirations. The most noticeable psychological tendency of British people in recent years has been the desire for reassurance, and the readiness to reassure themselves on the rare occasions when Ministers (and latterly the M.O.I.) have failed to give a happy picture of the prospect before us—the short-view prospect, well represented by absurdly exaggerated build-ups in three successive Libyan campaigns. Only during one period, after Dunkirk, was almost everybody really alarmed, pessimistic, and facing the grave facts; that was the time of real self-sacrifice and selfless hard work.

A graph of the weekly movement of cheerfulness and depression in the public mind shows a remarkable series of peaks and troughs. In any period when the news has not been particularly bad, cheerfulness has gone rocketing up, climbing, climbing. Then comes another setback. The line cataracts into the depths of gloom. But only for a short while. Soon it is climbing again; usually within a matter of days, people are again convinced that from now on the going is clear. This up-and-down fluctuation is unhealthy to a steady effort—and good morale is not thumbs-up and laughing, it is intelligent, consistent, continuous work, whether on the battlefield or at the bench. For optimum work it is not a good thing that people should get so cheerful and complacent as they have been in the past pre-Tobruk month. Talking and listening round England and Northern Ireland in recent weeks, I have sometimes wondered whether I was living in a country which still has not yet once defeated its two main enemies on land, or in a paradise of bold, painstaking fools. Determined pessimism, rising slowly and steadily to increasing cheerfulness on the basis of actual, demonstrable achievement, is surely the firmer basis for effective morale?

At many points in the home front picture we come up against this short-term psychology, of which astrology is one symptom, but also a stimulus. For instance, the Foulsham edition of Old Moore's Almanack for 1942 (there are several competing editions; this particular one has certified sales exceeding 3,000,000 a year) gives as its main prediction for June:

> It is reassuring and encouraging to find that—like the preceding Lunation—the Full Moon occurring at 5.29 a.m. on May 30th reveals Jupiter rising at London, on this occasion in close conjunction with Mercury, both planets being in sextile to Venus and trine the Midheaven. These figures are of the utmost importance and would be most appropriate to the conclusion of Peace.

The peace treaty will not actually be signed, apparently, until July, but in the meanwhile, the good news is by no means confined to Europe, for:

> At Nanking Jupiter and Mercury culminating promise a righteous Peace and the beginning of a New Era for China.

Old Moore even predicted a Favourite's Derby, which may be some slight consolation to the King, whose horse started 6-to-4 on favourite, and finished unplaced. There is nothing modern astrologers won't take on. The most-read astrological monthly recently worked out the Prime Minister's future. If Mr. Churchill followed his stars, he would be in Greenwich Village, not Washington, at present, for "May 5th to June 25th are the limits of the fourth period, which is conducive to all literary and artistic work."

Such material offers soothing prospects ahead. And where evil is anticipated, forewarned, it can be averted. This differs from the usual religious conception of the future, in which those who have done good according to a moral code, will have a relatively nice after-life, and those who have not will have a relatively bad time, or no time at all. Astrology has no social ethics; your future is determined by stars at the moment of birth rather than your conduct on earth. Undoubtedly reduced belief in a morally determined after-life has had an effect on our outlook, and is directly related to the increasing emphasis on the personal economic motive and the profit motive, which makes the week or year, the wage packet or the declaration of dividend, final arbiters of forward-thinking. In a recent Mass-Observation inquiry, under a third of people had any belief in an after-life. The minority who broadly believe in the old Christian idea are generally fortified thereby. An aluminium wire inspector says:

> I personally feel that death is the entrance into a fuller life and while there is a certain amount of fear of the unknown, yet when I go to bed I sometimes think how beautiful it would be to wake up in the other world where I believe all will have a fair chance, and pain, sorrow, loneliness and war will never come.

And a chemist:

> I do not think that I have much fear of death—probably because I do not see much likelihood of it occurring at the moment. I think I believe in some form of personal survival after death, and because of that I occasionally look towards death as an experiment—as a time when much more will be revealed to me.

The fear of dying, unrelieved by any satisfactory prospect in death, is a big influence on the minds of many and accentuated by the war. In our inquiry, 2 per cent. stated they were thinking less about death since the war, but 30 per cent. (especially women) were thinking definitely more. Where people have some definite belief in an after-life, it is very often reincarnation. A middle-aged married woman puts it:

> The terrible waste of young lives in war increases my belief in reincarnation. Surely the mind that could design the world must have some further use for these lives.

The vaguer view is expressed by this retired nurse:

> I have a feeling indefinable but very certain that there is a personality in me far above and beyond anything I can know; something which rules and directs me, but quite beyond my imagination or anything in my conscious world. There are no words for it; no sorrow and no joy reaches it. It is above it all and has its existence on another plane than this. But it is the real me.

When social historians come to write about these times, the lack of foresight which Britain showed in so many of her most important affairs may interest them more than anything else. They will then be able to relate the shortening of distance and lengthening of time through speed, the commercialisation of increasing leisure, the rise of industrialism and the decline in religion, a falling birth-rate, all leading to and from the shortened horizon of living. The crucial problem for the future of our civilisation (if it is to have a future) is the achievement of a satisfactory compromise between the increase in material, personal satisfactions, now made easy, and the decline in long-term social and spiritual satisfactions undermining the basis of *community* happiness.

This war has been a process of severe disillusion for a lot of people. To be exact, they have been made more quickly conscious of a gradual disillusion about accepted beliefs and ideals which was coming on unnoticed inside them. Now it is extending to widening disillusion about many of the processes of government, Empire, leadership, efficiency and formal truth. It is all mixed up with the eternal habit of hope, and with ordinary apathy; but the accelerated trend is unmistakable to anyone who quietly goes out to listen and look. In the inquiry above mentioned, when people were asked if any of their major beliefs had been altered by the war, over a third considered that they had been altered. The biggest change was in political outlook (almost invariably to the vague "Left"), but close behind came a general scepticism, most evident among soldiers, and extending to all politics. Astrology is one way of canalising anxious hopes and unorganised doubts, but even among those who believe in it, there is a realisation that it is only an aspirin to the headache of humanity. That it is a sort of medicine so extensively used is an extraordinary reflection on twentieth-century civilisation.

TOM HARRISSON

COLONIAL OUTLOOK: UNSETTLED

COLONIAL OFFICE enterprise is a surprising by-product of the war. The colonies have to be governed, unless like the main Pacific territories they are lost to the enemy. Besides, for practical and war purposes the territories ruled by the exiled "United Governments," the Free French, Belgians and Dutch, are co-ordinated with the British; in cases of strategic need (too few, some think) like Syria and Madagascar, by means of force. But this would not necessarily inspire energetic administration; on the contrary, with colonial officials spread pretty thin and largely cut off from Britain, it might mean stagnation. Whereas in fact two tendencies have developed, one progressive and the other reactionary. So far they run side by side without having reached a confluence.

The forces impelling these developments are, on the forward side, the presence in the Colonial Office of Lord Hailey, as a sort of majestic herald, with a committee of planners in touch with the allied colonial experts. Some of these are able, some benevolent, and some even both. Significant of increased sense of reality is the addition to the Colonial Office Staff of an African, a West Indian, and a first-rate anthropologist in the person of Dr. Audrey Richards. Behind all this is the steadily increasing interest in colonial affairs, felt by an informed public that has certainly increased since the days when League of Nations
mandatory reports were first published. Th
interest has been stimulated by dramatic co
flicts of interest between immigrants or capitalis
and colonial peoples, such as those in Kenya an
Palestine, the West Indies and Northern Rho
esia. More recent and more shaking are th
plain facts of the war; the campaigns in Afric
the strategic importance of tropical products li
oil, the loss of Malaya and Indonesia. And mo
important, because it belongs to the coloni
themselves, is the flowing tide of coloni
nationalism. It takes a hundred forms, but i
essence it is the same everywhere; reactio
against alien rule and alien exploitation, and th
desire of subject peoples to control their ow
lives. The colonial official does not exist, whethe
he is sympathetic to emancipation or not, wh
has not been conscious of it for years. Rea
the driest of colonial reports, and that tide sound
behind it as the sea murmurs in a shell.

The progressive policy must be credited wi
the West Indies Report, which, though unpub
lished, presumably confirmed the well-know
facts about the backwardness, squalor, and Bi
Business monopolism of the islands. Its pub
lished conclusions gave the impulse to th
Colonial Development Fund, and set Sir Fran
Stockdale to work planning the reconstructio
of this imperial slum. Again the Labour office
sent to various territories are a sound refor
The Colonial Office indeed is putting considerab
energy into raising standards of native welfar
a policy echoed by the Wallace-Welles America
statements. Lord Hailey in his speeches rin
the changes on this theme: it would ill become u
he says, if the native asked us for bread and w
gave him a vote. Also he sets up an antithe
between "trusteeship" as a static policy, an
an active planning of social betterment. This i
puzzling to students of the mandatory syste
for the "trusteeship" of the mandates is specifi
ally defined as aimed at "welfare and develop
ment," and their application has always bee
judged by the criterion of progress. There i
it seems, some opposition to the mandator
system floating in the official air. But w
assume that no responsible opinion coul
envisage the annexation of the mandated are
or of any other tropical territory involved in th
war. To obliterate the distinction between th
mandated territories and other possessions woul
be a public violation of treaties binding all th
United Nations, as well as of Britain's repeate
war-pledges.

The further one emerges from the committe
rooms of the Colonial Office into the open foru
of public opinion, the wider and less possessiv
grows the conception of Empire. There a
numerous private groups at work; Nuffie
College under Miss Perham, the Anti-Slaver
Society, the League of Nations Union, P.E.P
the Fabian Colonial Bureau, the Churches, th
Labour Party. All support the welfare polic
warmly. But most of them would assume th
social progress and political development a
inseparable. They would say that the econom
of subject peoples is healthiest precisely in tho
areas, like West Africa, Uganda and Tanganyik
where they exercise some political rights. Trib
or local self-government, the passion for educ
tion, and agricultural progress go broadly togethe
As soon as a man has bread in his belly, he wan
a vote—or its equivalent in terms of his ow
polity. Conversely the political helplessness o
native peoples is the means whereby they are ke
down and subjected to colour bar; are deni
equality of work and wages, expelled from the
land, and see the mineral wealth of their countr
alienated to foreign companies. The Afric
and the Islander is not so simple that he is n
aware of this; and he naturally believes th
political and economic justice are one. The We
Indies are not the only colonies ripe for sel
government. There are at this moment countri
where advisory councils could be turned in
responsible assemblies, and where Africans cou
be found to represent their own people in th
inner circles of the executive. This need n
mean voting in our fashion: what it should me

is the weighting of appointment so that the coloured majority is not subordinated to the white minority. We shall have to make such advances in the end: why not make them now, and forestall the haggling, grudging concession which takes all value out of progress?

Meantime, reaction is in the ascendant in a number of territories. The Copper-Belt Report gave official sanction to the colour bar in the North Rhodesian mines. Forced labour in Kenya and Nigeria may be followed by its imposition elsewhere. The land law of Southern Rhodesia is a disgrace to the British statute-book: and the Southern Rhodesian politicians are intriguing without pause or rest for the amalgamation of Northern Rhodesia and Nyassaland with their country. There are not wanting people in this country who urge exchange of populations in Europe, because they want this Nazi device of expropriation and expulsion to be accepted and applied to the peoples of Palestine or Kenya. The West Indies are in crisis, for the virtual Anglo-American condominium created by the leasing of naval bases will worsen the position of the people:—already "Jim Crow" incidents are reported. We must be quick in building up West Indian status, or the islanders will find themselves in the position of the negroes of Georgia.

The future of colonies is being determined, however, not in the Colonial Office so much as in the Board of Trade. There Sir Frederick Leith-Ross's committee, which consults allied experts, is planning production, distribution and consumption of tropical products. Now such planning is essential: speculation and cut-throat competition between minerals and foodstuffs produced in different colonies and empires has sometimes threatened to ruin all of them. Indeed, it is largely eliminated to-day by international combines of the traders in the main commodities. Rubber, tin, aluminium, sugar, oil, are "ringed" already; the choice is not one between competition and combination, it is between private international cartels, in the hands of the great barons of trade, and public international controls. Tea, with its heavy government representation, is the working model for the expansive control. But it must be remembered that the whole life, from their everyday work to their political status, of the colonial peoples is determined by these exploitations. A control of a mineral or a crop might be government-run and still keep the people poor, underpaid, over-taxed, and with no prospect of better things. For the principal charm of tropical production for the *entrepreneur* is cheap native labour. It is crucially important that the Leith-Ross Committee should plan not merely for the elimination of competition and the zoning of the markets, nor even merely for the supply of tropical products cheaply and abundantly for the use of consumers. It should begin from the principle that the land, resources and labour of the colonial peoples, as the essential elements in tropical production, must receive the main profits. Management, marketing, transport and capital should be paid a fair price as services, and every effort should be made to transfer the first two from foreign to native hands. Above that just price, profits should return to the colonies to improve living standards. Gold mines and agricultural concessions earning fantastic profits for European and Japanese shareholders were a natural part of nineteenth-century commerce. To-day they are more than an anachronism, they are a moral offence. Money has been the world's master; nowhere more than in the colonies does it need reducing to its proper place as the convenient general servant.

Clearly commercial controls will entail a very strong international organisation, whose success will depend upon the degree to which it is public and disinterested. It should also be open to non-colonial states, and indeed it must be. Tin, for example, comes from Bolivia, Malaya and Nigeria; and oil from widely different regions. But international colonial co-operation should be greatly extended in other ways. Any tropical nation should be free to join in the great regional research centres on health, agriculture, and nutrition, which should be set up inter-imperially after this war. Ethiopia, Egypt, the Near Eastern and Central American states should all share work and training on problems which are common to their regions, and no diminution of their sovereignty would be involved. Any nation, but primarily the colonial nations, who must increasingly train their own doctors, scientists, and agricultural experts. Impartial supervision and regular publicity is the right international contribution to the colonial problem. In essence, colonial empire has been rendered necessary by the devastating impact of trade and industry upon weak rural communities; and so long as they are not able to protect themselves against the settler and the trader, alien rule must continue. But the war has only hastened changes already taking place. In the philosophy of the United Nations, empire has passed the predatory stage, and is recognised by public opinion as a transient responsibility. Empires vary; but they must all aim, while protecting colonial societies from damage, at preparing them for maturity; and beneath every imperial policy must lie the consciousness that the colonial territories belong to their own peoples, and that the peoples belong to themselves. We owe the colonies a long debt, part of which we cannot repay. For Britain, the most positive act of restitution which we can offer is the abolition of the colour bar, whether political, social, or economic. To that extent, colonial advance lies with us; and the ending of race-hierarchy should be a fundamental of the peace settlement. The colonial peoples themselves, once opportunity is open to them, will grow to full manhood fast enough. FREDA WHITE

A LONDON DIARY

PAT on my remarks last week about the efforts of the 1922 Committee to kill thought and make nonsense of the proclaimed war aims of the United Nations comes the report that a new drive is being made against those who are considered progressive and therefore dangerous speakers on the British wireless. It is the 1922 Committee whose pressure has kept J. B. Priestley off the British air, though he is the most popular broadcaster found during this war. Now, I'm told, the same crowd are persistently demanding that he should be shut off the overseas air as well, and that under the same ban should come Laski, who also broadcasts overseas, and Joad and Huxley, who, as brain-trusters, have built up the one real success in British broadcasting of the last two years. You see what all this amounts to. The Government and the 1922 Committee do not see eye to eye on tactics. The Government is terrified of offending vested interests by allowing the British public to think about the implications of our democratic declarations, but it knows that these broadcasters are the best propagandists for the U.S.A. The 1922 Committee, on the other hand, irresponsible in its fear of change, plucks up courage in a moment of optimism to demand a ban on progressive speakers, home and abroad. How far such interference succeeds always depends on the political situation. We have been passing through a period of foolish optimism. If the situation now develops seriously the authorities will again rush round to the "progressives" and beg them to sustain home morale by talking once more about a people's war. The one thing they never consent to do is to fulfil the large promises made for propaganda reasons.

* * *

The cat is out of the bag about the 88 mm. gun. This is an anti-aircraft gun so mounted that it can be used either against aeroplanes or, by changing elevation, prove the most devastating anti-tank weapon. I wonder if any of our professional soldiers understood its significance in the Spanish war. I remember hearing of it as long ago as 1937, when the Germans were trying out all the devices of modern war under the guise of destroying Bolshevism in Spain. Our military authorities were so willing that "Bolshevism" (which was used to cover everything that was good, true and free in Spain) should be destroyed that they could not even take notice of what the German military press said. Some of the amateurs with a gift for observation did take notice. H. N. Brailsford, for instance, wrote, on his return from Spain, describing the new blitz technique, the dive bomber and the 88 mm. gun. In 1940, when Britain was obviously disastrously short of both anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, he wrote to a member of the War Cabinet calling his attention to the dual-purpose gun whose merits had been fully explained in a technical German military paper. The member of the War Cabinet who replied then with one of the usual complacent formulae may now recall Brailsford's memorandum and ask himself how many British lives his failure to force this lesson on the General Staff has cost.

* * *

Lord Winster has withdrawn his motion on shipping because the Lords proposed to debate it in secret. Mr. Shinwell continues to press for publication of the figures of shipping losses. And in both Houses there is strong feeling that much is lost and little gained by the present system—especially since figures which would be withheld here are quite often published in America. I have been re-reading some of the speeches and articles of leading German statesmen during the submarine campaign of 1917. From them it seems pretty clear that the secrecy adopted by the British Government about sinkings (and relevant trade figures) did hamper German calculations considerably. Helfferich complained of "a statistical smokescreen" put up in London. However, as their contemporary records show, this did not prevent the Germans from obtaining a fairly accurate picture of the losses and the dislocation of British supplies. What they failed, fatally, to calculate correctly were on the one hand the pace and effectiveness of counter-measures, and on the other the extent to which British domestic consumption could be cut without severe domestic trouble. Count Czernin, the Austrian Foreign Minister, was one of the few enemy statesmen who warned the two Kaisers that there were a lot more notches in the British belt that could and would be taken in if victory were dependent upon it.

* * *

At least one newspaper has recently raised doubts about the lines on which our current shipbuilding is being conducted. It is persistently stated by people who ought to be in a position to know, that even now we are trying to find some compromise between building the very best possible ship for use in present conditions, and a ship suitable for capturing or holding shipping business after the war. The fact that the control of Merchant Shipping at the Admiralty is in the hands of the two men responsible for the organised destruction of British shipbuilding capacity in the 'thirties has naturally, though perhaps unfairly, given colour to the belief which, I repeat, is held by some whose opinions cannot lightly be dismissed, that fear of a repetition of the financial losses suffered by certain firms because of the shipping glut after the last war is still an operative factor in London. It may well be that these suggestions are unfounded; I am sure they should be investigated. Oddly enough, the same fatal attempt to compromise between war-needs and after-the-war dreams, was at least partially responsible for the failure of the unrestricted submarine campaign of 1917. In that year, the German authorities actually restricted submarine construction and limited the number of yards turned over to it, because—it was explained—"we do not see what the devil we shall be able to do with such a lot of submarines after the war."

* * *

Incidentally, I recommend the story of the wrecking of British shipbuilding capacity in the 'thirties to the attention of those who are worried by the problem of what is to be done with the German armament industry after the war.

Under the leadership of Sir James Lithgow and Sir Amos Ayre, National Shipbuilders Securities, Ltd., succeeded in putting out of action for years British shipbuilding yards with a capacity which we should be exceedingly glad of to-day." Jarrow was a major casualty in that campaign, and it is no reply to point out that Sir James Lithgow's demoniac energy is now being as effectively employed in construction as it then was in destruction. G. B. S. might have had this story in mind when in *Back to Methuselah* he christened the capitalist monopoly of the future, *Breakages, Ltd.* Some firms gladly paid a big levy towards the elimination of "redundant" building capacity. On this analogy, all we have to do after the war is to form, on a much larger scale, a similar "wrecking" company led by, let us say, Vickers Ltd., Bethlehem Steel, U.S. Steel, and Duponts. In order to maintain the financial soundness of these companies and prevent a glut of armaments, they will be empowered to wreck the Krupp works for ever. The Krupp directors will then oppose the scheme on the ground that their hearts bleed at the prospect of mass unemployment in the Ruhr. They can easily be compensated by being given shares in the wrecking combine, whose future profits will be assured.

* * *

The top Treasury job, from which Sir Horace Wilson has retired at the age of 60, is really two jobs. In my view, they ought to be separated. Half the job is technical Treasury business; the other half is the supervision and appointment of Civil Service personnel. Sir Richard Hopkins, who belongs to the old school of able Treasury officials, is probably the best man available for the first part of the job. Sir A. W. Street, now Permanent Under-Secretary at the Air Ministry, who has the reputation of being the most up to date and lively of our great officials, would have known nothing about Treasury business. But then, I doubt if Sir Richard Hopkins is at all the man for the other half of his work, and that, on a broad view, is far the more important. The chief civil servant appointments are fathered on to each Minister by the Treasury: the Permanent Under-Secretary is often far more important than the Minister. The Head of the Civil Service who appoints these key officials needs to be a man with a lively and enterprising mind, capable of understanding that the great jobs of war organisation and post-war reconstruction that lie before us simply cannot be tackled by the old type of routineer.

* * *

J. A. Spender was already the Grand Old Man of London journalism (I say "London," because Manchester had an even grander and older journalist) when I first met him after the last war. He came to talk on the press to a Discussion Society at the London School of Economics. He described how on one occasion he was very alarmed at the warlike tendencies of one of the great press syndicates—presumably it was the Northcliffe press in the pre-war period. He went to see the proprietor, who listened to him and then said, "You suggest that this policy is dangerous? I assure you, you are quite wrong." He sent for the circulation books and triumphantly proved to Spender that his sales had risen steadily since the bellicose policy had been adopted. He had become incapable of distinguishing between a good policy and a policy that was good for circulation: these were synonyms in his mind. When the historian writes a footnote about that group of Liberal journalists, Scott, Spender and Gardiner, he will emphasise their stand against commercialism. They really said what they thought to be socially useful, even when it meant less popularity and smaller sales. As a result, Spender's *Westminster Gazette*, like the *Manchester Guardian*, had an influence over political decisions out of all proportion to its circulation. People who were seriously interested in politics read these papers because they believed that the people who read them were both well informed and comparatively disinterested. It was a misfortune for British journalism when Lord Cowdray bought the *Westminster* and turned it into a morning paper. Everyone who knew anything of journalism correctly prophesied its speedy extinction. It meant the end of an important political commentary: Spender retired to write standard biographies of Campbell-Bannerman and Lord Oxford. As a technically experienced journalist he must have had some gloomy satisfaction in seeing what a mess commercialism was capable of making of his competent paper. In the last thing that Northcliffe wrote (a pamphlet entitled *Millionaires and I*) he says that when he met Lord Cowdray (who as Pearson had made his millions in Mexican oil) and was asked by him what he thought of the new *Westminster*, he said, "Every morning when I see it it reminds me of the sort of job I should have made laying oil pipes for the first time."

* * *

The new Archbishop of Canterbury is earning the same reputation for wit as his equally famous father. The son inherits the gift of finding the right reply to the foolish questioner. You remember how the first Archbishop Temple was asked whether he believed in "special providences" by a woman who gave as an example the case of her aunt who slipped and broke her leg just in time to save her going to sea with a ship that was sunk with all hands. Was this a special providence? The Archbishop replied that he could not say because he did not know her aunt. The present Dr. Temple, I'm told, was similarly accosted by a devout lady who was troubled by the fact that officers' dances continued after midnight into the Sabbath. The Archbishop replied that whether this was a serious matter or not would depend on whether the Almighty took the same view as Mr. Morrison about the propriety of double summer time.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Coll Macdonald.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

"I firmly believe in the British Empire," said wealthy Lord Londonderry. There is only one *Herrenvolk*, in spite of Germany's claims. We are the *Herrenvolk*. "The Almighty put us outside Europe so that we could rule better."—*News Review.*

For the Chancellor to frown upon increased dividends is surely illogical, as well as being far from just to a wide circle of the public who have no trade union or noisy representatives to lay their case before Parliament.—*Financial Times.*

You talk about the burning of coffee to keep up prices. I quite agree, that was sheer lunacy. But *who* burnt the coffee? We didn't; the Brazilians burned it. Why? Because they wanted our money.—Beverley Nichols in *Sunday Chronicle.*

The Home Guards operated from the church porch.

Gun and bomb explosions punctuated the whole of the service.

"One man," said the Vicar last night, "told me they had captured the church. I said, 'You have no right to capture a church during a service'—and he replied, 'It would be worse if the Germans came.'"—From *The Daily Mirror.*

Twickenham Corporation have encouraged the seaside atmosphere by hiring 500 deck chairs from Worthing.—From *The Star.*

FOOTLING WHILE THE WORLD IS BURNING

LAST **week's session of the National** Churc **Assembly had a peculiar interest.** It was th **first time that Dr. Temple had presided,** as Archbishop of Canterbury, and it was largely du to the Archbishop that the Assembly was create by the Enabling Act passed by Parliament twenty-three years ago. In 1914, Dr. Temple, then man of thirty-three, resigned the headmastershi of Repton to become rector of St. James's, Piccadilly. His nearest ecclesiastical neighbour was Dic Sheppard at St. Martin's, and the two men, vastl different in temperament, were close friends They were disturbed by the failure of the Churc to pull its weight in the novel troubles of the firs great war. They heard from bewildered arm chaplains that the men had no use for religion They heard from the parishes that the scant congregations were becoming more and mor bored by pulpit platitudes. And they becam convinced that the Church could never be spiritually effective until it was to some extent release from the shackles of the State.

The smallest reforms were impossible withou Parliamentary sanction, and Parliament was fa too busy with war preoccupations to bothe about Church affairs. So the Life and Libert Movement was launched by Sheppard and Dr Temple to demand from Parliament modifie self-government by a representative Assembly Dr. Temple resigned his living to devote hi whole time to the agitation.

The Enabling Act, the result of the Life an Liberty Movement, created an Assembly o three houses, the House of Bishops, the House o Clergy, and the House of Laity, sometimes sittin separately and sometimes together. The Assembly is empowered to pass measures which have t be submitted for Parliamentary approval, and with the exception of the Prayer Book Measure of 1927 and 1928, there have been practicall no rejections. But these Measures were of mor importance than any others sent to the Lord and Commons. Some of the other Measure have made for smoother administration, but i cannot be claimed that the Assembly has adde a jot to the Church's influence and prestige i the nation, and I should suppose that it mus be a sad disappointment to the men whos enthusiasm was responsible for its existence.

The root weakness of the Assembly is that it i an example of pseudo-democracy. The Hous of Bishops includes all English diocesans. Th House of Clergy, besides Deans and Archdeacons is composed of clergy elected by their brethre in each diocese, but the poorer men cannot affor the cost of attending the sessions, and are under-represented.

Similarly with the House of Laity, only men an women with nothing in particular to do can spar the time to stand for election by the dioceses, an the House of Laity is dominated by ecclesiastica lawyers and by the Cecils and other ecclesiastically minded aristocrats. The late Earl of Selborn was the chairman of the House and he has bee succeeded by another peer, the rank and fil being mainly made up, as I have written before of squires from the shires and spinsters from th spas. The workaday England that still goes t church—it is not a very large England—know next to nothing of the Assembly.

The result has been that much of the time o the Assembly is devoted to faddiness and pettiness and the report of last week's proceeding are tragic in their suggestion of remoteness fro the needs of the times.

At the beginning of last year, the Malver Conference, called by the Archbishop, expressed in a series of notable Findings, the Church' demand for radical social reconstruction. Sinc then His Grace has published his *Christianit and Social Order*, a Penguin best seller, in whic he sets out the objectives of a Christian revolutio Years ago, in his Gifford Lectures, he declare that Christianity is the most materialistic of a the world religions, by which he meant that i is concerned with man's material as well as with his spiritual well-being.

It might therefore have been supposed that the Assembly, under His Grace's direction, would last week have passed resolutions urging the immediate need for increased old-age pensions, family allowances (they have been constantly advocated by the Archbishop) and the raising of the school age—to mention three insistent needs among many—and that it would have followed more than one bishop in denouncing the Vansittart demand for vengeance when the war is won. But the Assembly cared for none of these things.

On the first day, the principal debate was concerned with the New Parishes Measure which contained a clause empowering the authorities to hand over the patronage of a new parish to "a person or body of persons willing to contribute to its endowment," a suggestion to carry on the monstrous custom of rich people buying an advowson to find a job in the Church for some inefficient relative. After an outspoken speech by the Bishop of Salisbury, the Assembly deleted this clause from the Measure, much to the annoyance of Lord Quickswood, who wanted rich people to be encouraged to make a right use of their money.

On Tuesday, the Assembly considered three Measures designed to interfere with the parson's freehold. As it is, it is a most complicated business to get a man out of a parish, when once he has been installed. He may have grown aged and senile, he may be a notorious slacker, he may have alienated his congregation, but, except in cases of gross misconduct, he cannot be removed. On the other hand, the generally underpaid parish priests are noticeably jealous of the parson's freehold as their only possession. There is no assurance of employment elsewhere and there is no provision of adequate old-age pensions.

One of the Measures passed last week gives the bishop authority to compel an incumbent, past his work, to appoint a curate, though no provision apparently is made to enable the unfortunate old gentleman to pay the curate.

On the last day, the Assembly considered an interim report of a Commission on Training for the Ministry, and was most interested in whether or no every pale young curate should know enough Greek to be able to read the New Testament in the original. The younger clergy are notoriously uneducated. There are still some learned men in the parishes, though intimate acquaintance with the Fathers is not enough to make a man a good pastor of souls in a modern village. But the majority, after three years at a university and probably a pass degree, have had one year at a theological college and have then been turned out into the parishes. Preaching in the Church of England is progressively inept and the young clergyman begins a career of immense difficulty often with no knowledge of the workaday world.

In my view before a man is admitted to a theological college, his vocation should be tested, his general education should have reached a reasonable level whether or not he has a university degree and he should have spent at least three years in some secular employment. Of the half-dozen thoroughly efficient parish priests, whom I know, one began life as a commercial chemist, one as an elementary school teacher. The staffs of the colleges should be enlarged, the subjects should include economics and political science, and the men should be taught how to speak clearly, coherently.

It takes fifteen years to train a Jesuit. The ministers of the Established Church of Scotland, I believe, spend four years in a post-graduate course in theology and philosophy. These men are educated professionals. The present generation of Anglican priests are usually well intentioned but rarely gifted amateurs. The Assembly, I imagine, regarded the provision of such real training as I have suggested as impossible and was content to let the curate off his Greek.

So the proceedings ended. The Church had footled while the devil was setting the world alight.

SIDNEY DARK

FAR, FAR AWAY

AN elderly man in a brown bowler hat stood at the bar of the refreshment-room in a wayside station, drinking bitter out of a glass mug. He had sandy-grey hair and a sandy-grey moustache, and the deep wrinkles at the corners of his eyes and his mouth gave him the look of a man who had spent a great deal of his life being cheerful. Wrinkles and twinkles combined to give this impression even when he merely turned round to say "Good morning." The young barmaid was reading a novel, for the place was nearly empty, and, as cheerful men usually enjoy talking, he asked her: "That a good book you've got?" She turned the book round and looked at its cover. "Not very," she said resignedly; "it's about murder—two murders." He shook his head at her as if this were a good joke. "There you are," he said, "reading about murder, and I'm willing to bet that you'd be scared of a mouse." "Of course, I'm scared of mice," she said. "All women are," he declared in one of those rash generalisations that reveal man as the only philosopher among the animals; "I never knew a woman yet who wasn't scared of mice and spiders—two of the most harmless creatures ever made. I'm willing to bet you're scared of spiders." "Of course, I'm scared of spiders," she said. "Of course, you are," he agreed, shaking his shoulders with laughter.

"And what about rats?" he went on; "I'm willing to bet you're scared of rats." "Aren't you?" she asked him. "No," he said, "I don't mind any of them things. I've slept in a roomful of rats. Did you ever wake up at night to find rats scampering all over your bed in the dark?" "I'll scream," she told him, "if you go on saying things like that." "My idea is," he said, "that, if we had more sense we'd make use of rats—for food. I've often wanted to eat a rat. They say it tastes just as good as rabbit." "Now you're trying to make me sick," she protested. "No," said he; "don't be silly; it's all a matter of prejudice."

I asked him whether he had ever known country people, when making cider, to throw a dead rat into the liquor to give it body. "Often and often," he assured me; "they used to put almost anything into the cider—meat, rats and slugs. Many a nice bowlful of slugs I've seen tipped into the cider. It eats them all up. How would you like," he asked the girl, "to drink a nice bowl of cider with the slugs still floating in it?" She pretended to be about to throw the book at him. "It's very nice," he insisted, putting up his arm to protect himself; "I've often had one. It was strong stuff—would make you drunk—even the old ducks used to get drunk."

"But there's one thing," he admitted, "that does turn my stomach. I never could abide snakes. I seem to have a kind of horror of them, The grass-snake is harmless and will always run away from you; but an adder will never move till she has swallowed her young, and, if she bites you, it does you more harm than good. I worked on a farm for most of my life, and one of my jobs was to kill adders. I've seen myself killing as many as fifty in a day. But I never liked it. I hate even the sight of a grass snake. It makes me feel all queer about the stomach." "I'm terrified of snakes," said the barmaid; "I saw a snake on the pictures last week and I screamed."

"Still," said the man, "snakes or no snakes, I often wish I was back on the old farm. I love farm work—especially hay-making. I'm thinking of spending my holiday this year working on a farm. I don't want any pay. All I want is plenty of work, and"—his face brightening—"plenty of beer. Of course, the work is a lot lighter nowadays than when I was young. I remember the time when I used to get up at four o'clock in the morning, drink half a pint of parsnip wine at my breakfast—I never had tea—then go off to the fields with a half-gallon of cider and work till it became too dark to see. You won't find people willing to work like that to-day. But it did us good—kept us all happy and healthy, and what more can anybody want?"

As my train was due, I had not time to wait and attempt to answer his question. But on my way to town I could not help wondering whether in spite of the half pint of parsnip wine for breakfast and the large allowance of cider reinforced with slugs, his early life had been lived in such paradise as he imagined. He was, it was obvious, constitutionally cheerful, and, if you are constitutionally cheerful, you can be happy apparently even at the North Pole. Englishmen seem to be peculiarly richly endowed with the gift for being happy in conditions in which there is no reason for being happy. Old Bill is not simply a myth. He is a genuine national character. He is often ugly, fat, and furrowed as to the face: but, if he came back to earth after a thousand years of Purgatory, he would sit in a village inn and keep you late for dinner, telling you about all the fine times he had had.

What, then, is the secret of his happiness? It is due, I fancy, not only to his constitutional cheerfulness, but to the fact that he grew up in a good-humoured home and went to work as a child among good-humoured people. This, I imagine, is a fairly common experience in country life. The children I used to know who worked on farms during the summer at an age at which they ought still to have been creeping to school in the charge of nurse, mostly seemed to me to be extraordinarily happy. Probably the normal child enjoys working in the open air among its unvicious elders, helping with the hay, the flax and the corn. I used to enjoy it myself for an hour or so. It is like going to church for the first few times. You may get tired of it later, but before that there was a time when you stood upon a peak in Darien—a time that will remain with you in memory till your ultimate cough.

Country life is manifestly more productive of these happy memories than town life. We seldom hear a rose-coloured story of the life of a half-timer in the factories. Yet poor town children, too, when they grow up to be elderly men with wrinkles at the corners of their eyes and their mouths, will tell you what good times they had when they were young. My own fellow townsmen, brought up to a hard and unluxurious life, have often regaled me with their accounts of an Elysian boyhood in which they experienced the joys of rioting in the streets and at football matches—throwing stones and rivets at other people who differed from them slightly in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures—and, as I have listened to them, I have sometimes been almost convinced that life outside the working-class districts of Belfast was in those days scarcely worth living. Life in the old days they saw in a haze of glory, and clearly they would not have missed it for worlds.

I asked a man the other day why people so often idealised a childhood that would have seemed to most of us terrible, and he replied "Boastfulness." He had had relations who had run off to sea at an early age—as boys used to do, either because they were unhappy at home or because they had passions like those of the migrant birds—and he maintained that what makes them so happy when they begin to tell about their early experiences is mainly the delight in showing that they have endured hardships unknown to common men. This may be true; but then why do so many men who spent their boyhood at public schools not boast, instead of grumbling, about their lost Atlantis of miseries? Is it that they lack the power of self-deception of the working-classes? Or is it that the atmosphere of money is hostile to the atmosphere of philosophy?

Certainly, there is scarcely any world in which one would not rather have grown up than the world of the moneyed Mr. Podsnap—Mr. Podsnap who, on being told that in the previous week six people had died of starvation in London, said: "I don't believe it." How one sympathises with Miss Podsnap as during the dance in that blind, complacent, Golden-Calfish home, she expresses her hatred of dancing, but confesses to Mrs. Lammle that she thinks she might have liked it if she had been "a chimney-sweep on May day!"

I do not, of course, wish to belittle money, but the hardships of the respectable seem to afford less happiness in retrospect than the hardships of, at least, many of the less conventional poor. Never, if Miss Podsnap had lived to be eighty would she have felt any nostalgia for her father's gold-chained home as a happy land. Yet an old farm labourer can boastfully look back to a heavenly time when he used to rise at four in the morning, drink half a pint of parsnip wine, and work till nightfall. The recipe for happiness remains one of the mysteries of life. Perhaps it always will.

Y.Y.

EDITORIAL

"For two or three days . . . criticism of the battle was held up. You cannot have a free press and at the same time instructions to prevent optimistic statements being made."—DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, June 23.

Battle rages to and fro,
  Baffling prediction;
Man for man we match the foe,
  Such is our conviction.
Grave news from the Middle East
  Is in our possession
Which must be, until released,
  Handled with discretion.

Though our state might well be worse,
  Outposts have retreated.
There may be a new reverse
  (Reverse must be deleted).
Under desert storms and suns
  Fighting grows intenser.
We have not their weight of guns
  (Guns cut by the censor).

New offensives we await,
  And it should be hinted
Egypt may share Libya's fate.
  (Hint must not be printed.)
Our Imperial General Staff,
  Now long past maturity,
May write the Empire's epitaph
  (Staff censored for security).

(Reader, we may say our say
  Under general warning.
We may well be here to-day,
  And gone to-morrow morning.
Reader, England's Press is free,
  But the Editorial
Must be thus, lest it should be
  The Editor's memorial.)

SAGITTARIUS

RECORDING BRITAIN

Our governing class has shown an ostentatious contempt for the characteristic beauties of this country. The Public Schools have been largely responsible for this proud philistinism, but also a Victorian belief persists that it is morally wrong to preserve a fine building when its destruction would bring financial profit. Our heritage of natural and architectural beauty has for many years excited the destructive appetites of Government departments, Municipalities, County Councils and Ecclesiastical Commissioners, no less than of urban landlords and speculative builders. The German bombers have continued the work, but fortunately with less discrimination; they destroy hideous modern buildings as well as fine old ones. Their activities, moreover, have focussed attention upon the extent of our losses, and owing to the generosity of the Pilgrim Trust our grandchildren will have some notion of what their country once looked like. For the Pilgrim Trust has enabled artists to record a representative selection of British scenes. At the National Gallery the second instalment of views is now to be seen. The standard has risen remarkably since last year. Some of the artists still fail to furnish the required information, notably Messrs. R. D. Cowern, Bernard Adams and John Cooper, whose technique, whatever one may think of it aesthetically, does not provide good records. But how excellent is the work of John Piper, Kenneth Rowntree, Mona Moore, Frances Macdonald, Louisa Puller, A. S. Hartrick, Barbara Jones, du Plessis, I. Hawkins, G. W. Hooper and Caroline Ediss. Topographical drawing was a great strength of the British School in the early years of the last century, and we owe profound gratitude to the Pilgrim Trust for the current revival. For most of these water colours and drawings admirably represent their subjects, and the subjects are most of them very well chosen. We are shown not only ancient churches, mansions and bridges, but Methodist chapels, early industrial buildings and pubs. (Mr. Rowntree and Miss Puller are particularly happy in their choice of sites.) The responsible committee has shown a wisely catholic taste, recognising that a building of 1840 or even 1880 can be as interesting as one of 1340. While evidently country houses are the most important English contribution to architecture, the country is dotted with curious, felicitous and too little studied small buildings, which deserve to be both recorded and preserved. The Exhibition also includes a set of views of Windsor Castle by John Piper, which have been commissioned by the Queen. Her Majesty has already shown her interest in art by the purchase of pictures by Sickert, Wilson Steer, Augustus John, Ethel Walker, and Duncan Grant. Her patronage of one of the best younger painters sets an example for which we cannot be too grateful. The Royal Family, since George IV, had renounced this important function. But Mr. Piper's water colours, like those made at Windsor by Paul Sandby, are entirely worthy of their destination. They are representative of contemporary sensibility, they are personal, and they give an account at once clear and imaginative of their subjects. The rest of the exhibition places the public under a deep obligation to both the generosity of the Pilgrim Trust and to the taste of the responsible committee.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

THE MOVIES

"The Defeat of the Germans Before Moscow," at the New Gallery

This Russian film is calculated to bring home to every spectator what war means. We all know of the facts, but here we are made to feel them. A parade in Red Square and an unemotional speech by Stalin set in motion the vast machinery by which Moscow saves itself from capture: street barricades, tanks followed by white-clad men in skis, looking like Arab sheiks; bomber squadrons; cavalry; armoured trains; parachutists. And a camera-man descends with the parachutists and follows them in the attack. There were, indeed, fifteen camera-men in the heat of the fighting, and we see a village recaptured and the German soldiers emerging from their hiding places, with their hands above their frost-bitten heads. We also see what the Russian villagers found when they returned; children disfigured by German lust; men and women hanging in rows from the gallows; women with their babies lying dead in the snow, having been driven out to their deaths; soldiers burnt alive and retaining the gestures of their final agony. Nothing has been previously shown comparable in horror with these photographs. The impression made by the film lies deeper, however, than its horrors. In the glimpses of the common soldier and the ordinary civilian we feel the humanity as well as the unity and strength of a great people.

Correspondence

SECURITY AND AIR POWER

SIR,—In your admirable article, "Speaking of Security" (June 13th) there is much with which I agree most cordially. For instance, the more we realise how important will be the post-war planning during armistice time and the more this is stressed the better. I was, however, somewhat horrified that my idea of the three Great Powers at first taking charge of the air was dismissed rather curtly with the words that they "reserve to themselves the exclusive right to bomb mankind into obedience," and for that reason was an absurdity. Perhaps I did not elaborate the scheme adequately in the House of Lords, which would have justified such an interpretation, but in my Wilbur Wright Memorial Lecture the position is clearer and I definitely state: "I do not for one moment lay it down that at the right time our present enemies should not come into the general scheme. The idea is world co-operation and not penalisation."

All planning for post-war is a waste of time unless we see to it that a major war in every generation is not to become a habit. How is this to be achieved? Let us look, first of all, at the general military situation. Great armies can be stopped and rendered harmless if they are without air power, and are met by overwhelming air superiority. Navies and great battleships without overwhelming air support are unable to operate or be offensive in any way. Nor, incidentally, can the "freedom of the seas" at present be ensured by surface craft. Air alone can do it. Lest I offend the blue water school, let us all ponder on the two recent naval battles between the Japanese and the United States. In both these battles not a shot was fired, no surface vessel got within 150 miles of each other, yet the punishment on either side was indeed high.

We are left, therefore, logically with this truth, that if air power be controlled, war can be controlled.

My suggestion is a bold one. I suggest at first the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A. and ourselves, together with all the victorious nations, say that flying in all its branches is to be controlled and vested in an International Board. They will be able to fly anywhere and everywhere, the "Usque ad Coelum" limitation disappearing. Internal air transport would be delegated to each country under the broad control of the Board, but a watch would be kept to see that building of aircraft was not indulged in anywhere in such a way as to make the sudden appearance of a national air force a possibility. The great air routes of the world would be run by the Board internationally, that is with combined crews. At first, of course, converted long-range bombers would be suitable, but slowly the economic aspect of flying must play a more and more important part till routes pay, which they are far from doing at present. That may come, but this situation faces us to-day. We are decided to keep an international policeman. That means armaments that are expensive and of no use to anyone. Keeping air communication going would give the world the "big stick" it wants wielded internationally, and at the same time foster transport and intercommunication between the whole world, and there can be no movement that can have a greater internationalising influence than good air services.

Consider what is to happen if we do not do something along these lines. First of all, air communications being an expensive form of travel, unable to pay for itself, will collapse unless Governments subsidise it. The only reason for subsidy is a potential national air force, and slowly such national services will be built up again. This, I think all will admit, is indeed a gruesome thought.

A policeman for the world directed by an international Watch Committee must be invented. Another League of Nations without real force behind it will fail again; but here we have the opportunity of having something overwhelming in its power when wanted, and yet an armament that in normal times can add very much to the health and general prosperity of the world. Later as flying pays for itself it should be self-supporting financially, but none the less powerful.

It is a bold conception. It clashes with a lot of vested interests existing to-day and liable to become more powerful. Now is the time to get such a scheme thought out and agreed to. If we leave it too late, we shall all lose the stimulus we have to-day. We shall all be licking our wounds, and slowly but surely we will allow to grow up forces that may well bring a repetition of a world at war, but next time more terrible yet.

The inventions of physical and mechanical science run ahead of human wisdom, until the danger comes, and indeed has come when we produce something that may well destroy us. It is the duty of the wise to see the future, to realise the dangers that mankind is subject to by the invention of three-dimensional warfare, and so to plan our international organisation that we use the product of man's brain for good and not destruction.

70 Pall Mall,
S.W.1.

BRABAZON OF TARA

[We are glad to have Lord Brabazon's persuasive and courteous letter. Our misunderstanding of his position was obviously due to the brevity of his speech in the Lords. We are in general agreement with the position he outlines in this letter, but we think some additions on the political side essential. He has met our objections, firstly by recognising the necessity of associating the lesser United Nations with any organisation from the start, and secondly by reserving a place "at the right time" for the peoples who are now "the enemy." There should be a wide welcome at the armistice for some such bold scheme as this, for the creation of an international Aerial Police Force, and for the internationalisation of civilian flying. This in turn involves the setting up of what Lord Brabazon aptly calls a Watch Committee. So far we agree. But in our analysis, a Watch Committee in its turn involves before long the creation of an International Government which can legislate over an agreed range of subjects. We must provide for orderly change, when change is due, as well as for security. Failing this, our Watch Committee would stereotype things as they are for all time. Secondly, though we must provide a police force, we wish to rely on coercion as little as possible. The cement which holds the peoples together in the international society of to-morrow should be the recognition that it confers positive benefits on its members. These should include tangible economic gains as well as cultural advantages.—Ed., "*N.S. & N.*"]

ANTI-SEMITISM

Sir,—The comments of leading Jews on the Jewish offenders in the Black Market seem mostly beside the point. They express doubt that these offences are any evidence that Jews are more dishonest than other people; they point at the traditional limitations imposed on Jews and at all the other economic and social reasons why there may be an abnormal proportion of swindlers among them. Of course there are reasons. As if that mattered.

What matters to us Jews is to get rid of these swindlers—and quickly and radically at that. However convincing the reasons may be for their existence, we must strain every effort of which we are able to put an end to that existence.

There is the law for everyone and there must be equality before the law of the land for Jews and non-Jews. But the law of the land has to be supplemented in this case by stern action by the Jewish community. These swindlers cause serious harm to the war effort and the State must punish them with rigour; but to us Jews they form a deadly danger and we must therefore add to the usual punishment the harshest measures within our power.

As disloyal citizens of a great nation at war, these people are despicable; as Jews in a war against Hitler they are beneath contempt. At a time when our nearest kin are being dumped down by train-loads to die in the Ghettos of Poland, when death-carts piled high with unidentified corpses collected in the streets of these towns can be seen in illustrated papers, there are Jews who form conspiracies in groups up to a dozen to defraud the country on whose victory the avenging of these murders depends, the country whose fall would spell extermination to us all. This is the kind of scum for whom we Jews all together and our small children, and even the descendants of these children, will all be made to suffer if we continue to explain these people away instead of eliminating them.

It is them or us. There was a great cry when the Jews were driven from Germany. There must be raised a better cry now. There is little pride in crying out against an oppressor. We must now raise our voice to rouse ourselves and—at least—to rid ourselves of corruption; of these miserable parasites who will readily seek protection behind the greatness of famous Jews and behind the solid mass of hard working honest Jewry, if for their misdeeds we all incur distrust, contempt and the danger of persecution.

I suggest the setting up of a Jewish Vigilance Council for the extermination of Jewish Black Market offenders. It should undertake to collect and publish records of Jews who have been convicted in the Courts. It should organise a life-long boycott of these persons as businessmen and generally take every measure within the law to make sure they will never rise again to any respected or lucrative position. The Council should promote its action by meetings in Jewish quarters, and should set up everywhere sub-committees which will be responsible for organising local opinion. It will be a hard fight but a good fight.

M. Polyani

Department of Chemistry,
University of Manchester.

FOR THOSE ASHORE

Sir,—The introductory note to Mr. Balchin's article "For those Ashore," in your issue of 6th June, states that the author, now a gamekeeper, had long experience as a sailor "in earlier days." The last three words may be the explanation of the fact that the author, in asking for definite action by the Government to lay out an immediate plan for better conditions ashore for officers and men of the Merchant Service, appears to be unaware that the Government has not only already made plans for better hostels and recreational centres for the Merchant Navy but is actively giving effect to these plans.

In 1940 the Minister of Labour and National Service formed the Seamen's Welfare Board to advise him on all questions concerning the welfare of seamen in British ports and of the crews of British ships in oversea ports. He also set up Port Welfare Committees in the principal ports in this country on which shipowners, seamen's and officers' unions, voluntary organisations and Government Departments, in particular the Ministry of War Transport, are represented. In accordance with the recommendations of these bodies, in three ports hostels have already been set up at Government expense and in two other ports they are being set up. In certain ports recreation centres are being established at Government expense or with Government assistance. The management of all these hostels and most of the recreation centres has been entrusted to the National Service Hostels Corporation, Ltd., a body set up by the Minister of Labour and National Service, to manage hostels for war workers.

In addition, the voluntary organisations are being encouraged by the Government to improve and expand the hostel and institute facilities they have provided for many years. Although in exceptional cases the standards of amenities still leave much to be desired, the great majority of the voluntary organisations are co-operating loyally and are endeavouring, subject to the unavoidable restrictions of wartime, adequately to meet the needs of seamen in the ports.

A. S. Frere

Director of Public Relations,
Ministry of Labour and
National Service

LONDON CHURCHES

Sir,—I should like to correct the impression which may be given to your readers by the remarks of your reviewer of a book on *London Churches* by my friend Mr. Gerald Cobb in your issue of June 6th. In your reviewer's attack on the London Diocesan Authorities for what he calls their neglect of the City churches before and after the air raids on the City, he has given a most one-sided account and it would have been better if he had verified his statements before he made them.

A great deal of preparation had been made against air attack before it started; and most of the City church treasures that were easily removed had already been taken away—plate, registers, parish records and some furniture.

Very few of these particular treasures have been lost. It is true that larger pieces of furniture had not been dealt with, but immediately it was found in December, 1940, that attacks on the City were developing in size and severity the Bishop of London appointed

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A. L. Rowse

A CORNISH CHILDHOOD

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JONATHAN CAPE

a small committee to deal with the matter. I do not believe that any Government department or any private body could have been more expeditious than his Committee. The "treasures" of the City churches were placed in four classes: and, step by step, the most valuable first, these treasures were removed or, where that was impossible, they were specially dealt with *in situ*. A full account of this appeared in the issue of the *City Press* of April 10th. When it is said that "even after the fire-raid of December, 1940, little was done," this is ludicrously untrue. In fact, since that date only a very small proportion of old and historic treasures have been damaged or destroyed.

This year the Committee has spent a further sum of £1,000 to give special fire protection for six representative towers of City churches. Nor is it true that no precautions were taken against fire in the earlier days; much had been done. As to St. Olave's, Hart Street, which is specially mentioned, it had already been arranged that the monuments and treasures should be removed, and the private gift only paid a small part of the total expense involved which was borne partly by the funds of the church itself and partly by the Bishop's Committee.

The tomb of Rahere in St. Bartholomew the Great was also dealt with by the Committee; it was found that the expert advice obtained was against protection by sand bags offered by a generous private donor, and the tomb was bricked in.

The London Diocese can be well content to be judged for its thought and care for the City churches when the full story can be told after the war.

T. WELLARD
Secretary of the Bishop of London's
Committee for the City Churches.

"HEATED PEOPLE"

SIR,—In your recent article on the Fuel debate you made the following statement:

> The ordinary consumer's voice has hardly been heard. The famous fuel debate of May 7th was primarily a conflict of interests, variously voiced by representatives of heavy industries, of electricity, and of the coal-owners and miners. Indeed, Ben Frankel, M.P. for a constituency which suffered specially in last winter's East End coal shortage, opened his speech by apologising: "I do not claim to be a specialist on the subject, but I represent as we all do, certain interests."

First, my name is Dan Frankel, M.P. for the Mile End Division of Stepney, not, as stated by you, Ben Frankel. Many colleagues have spoken to me of the opinion that the general public would derive from the statement, torn from its context, which you have printed as quoted from me: "but I represent, as we all do, certain interests." Every person who listened to my speech in the House knew that, by those words, I meant the interests of the working classes, my constituents, but your method of presentation of those words has given the public the impression that I represent some vested or big business interests. This is not true, as a perusal of my speech in the Official Report will show.

In fact, as I made clear in my speech, the Government in their new proposals contained in the White Paper dealt with in the Coal Debate of last week, have, in my opinion, badly let down both myself and those who hold my views, and I also believe that, in the main, their apparent change of policy is due to those interests which you, in your article, erroneously ascribed to me.

DAN FRANKEL

The House of Commons,
S.W.1.

[We quoted Mr. Frankel because his ironic remark exactly illustrated our point. His whole speech and record utterly rule out the interpretation which, he says, many of his colleagues put upon the passage in question. We are astonished, as well as sorry, that anyone should have so misunderstood us, and we apologise for the misprint of his very well-known name.—ED., *N.S. & N.*].

HOME GUARD

SIR,—With reference to the article in your journal of June 13th, on "Disinterestedness of War Workers," I should like to give Mr. Spender my experience.

I am a platoon commander in the Home Guard, and my four section sergeants are a bank clerk, bakehouse operative, dye house operative and blacksmith respectively. The junior N.C.O.s comprise a bricklayer, plumbers' operative, two clerks, a shoe operative, a market gardener and an electrical salesman.

All these people are keenly interested, and give cheerfully of their scanty leisure. They have now taken up Weapon Training for the Civil Defence services in addition to their other duties.

The bank clerk was unanimously elected platoon sergeant by the other N.C.O.s, and I have not had a single man refuse stripes or promotion when it was offered.

W. E. WARNER

THE LONGEST WAY ROUND

SIR,—In accordance with the national custom of going to Birmingham by way of Beachy Head, the increase in miners' wages is apparently to be met by raising the price of coal and offsetting this by subsidies on foodstuffs. Thus we are to pay up at the coal merchant's, get a divvy at the grocer's and finance the divvy by taxation including levies on other commodities. I suggest that we have now got to the stage when it would be more logical and equitable to distribute the national income by wrapping it up in small parcels, putting it in a bran-tub and allowing the population to dip for its shares. The sawdust could be furnished by disembowelling a random sample of Ministers and ex-Ministers, and adding the full contents of one G.H.Q. communiqué writer.

G. L. SCHWARTZ

POLITENESS WEEK

SIR,—I beg to join issue with Mr. David Scott on the apparent deterioration of English manners.

My experience is quite the opposite; the courtesy, kindness and consideration shown me by all railway officials is beyond praise. I am helped in and out of my carriage and treated with the utmost consideration by them. As for the rudeness of waitresses at the station buffets, I have always found the girls only too delighted to look after the wants of any person in khaki.

Contrast this with the German train officials. I came over from Russia on a through ticket to London; at Berlin I broke my journey and went to Hamburg; to rejoin my train I had to get a ticket to the station at which my through ticket was available; when I got to this station I was told that I must take another ticket to a further station. This request for further tickets was repeated at each stage until I refused to pay anything further, and stated that I held a through ticket to London from Messrs. Thos. Cook & Son, and that claims could be made to them. I was then told that I must pay or get out. I refused to get out, and as a consequence was informed that I should be put out and the official immediately sent four soldiers, with fixed bayonets, to do so—then I paid.

The only discourtesy I have had in England is by officials of the Joint Stock Banks, who treat me like dirt.

There is one point in Mr. Scott's letter with which I agree, and that is the politeness and courtesy of the underdog; more power to him.

CHARLES SCHLEE

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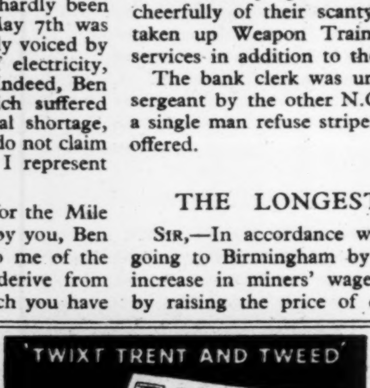

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SECKER & WARBURG

BOOKS IN GENERAL

It is a long time now since the earth seemed solid under the feet to our novelists, since caprice, prophecy, brains and vividness meant less than the solid substance of time and place. And Arnold Bennett, in books like *The Old Wives Tale* and *The Clayhanger Family*, seems to be the last of the novel's four square gospellers. I return to him often and always, once I get into him, with satisfaction. A book like *The Clayhanger Family* has the incised sobriety as well as the tedium of a detailed engraving; and there is, oddly, enough of the connoisseur in Bennett to induce our modern taste. He is not a dilettante in the ego's peculiarities and he is without interest in elegance; he is the connoisseur of normality, of the ordinary, the awkward, an heir—one might say—of the makers of the Staffordshire figures who thought Moody and Sankey as good a subject as equestrian princes of the blood. We speak of the disciplines of belief, of art, of the spirit: Bennett speaks of the discipline of life itself, reveres rather than rebels against its frustrations, kneels like some pious behaviourist to the drab sight of reflexes in process of being conditioned. He catches the intolerable passing of time in our lives, a passing which blurs our distinctiveness and quietly establishes our anonymity, until our final impression of him is as a kind of estate agent's valuer walking with perfunctory step through the rooms of our lives, ticking his inventory and treating us as if we were long deceased. He cannot begin—and I think this is his chief inheritance from the French naturalists—until we are dead, until we and our furniture have become undistinguishable evidence. I find this very restful. Frustration—*pace* Mr. Wells—is one of the normal conditions of life and calming is the novelist who does not kick against the pricks.

Fidelity and sincerity are the words one puts first to Arnold Bennett's work. Some years ago there appeared an anthology called *The English in Love*, containing love passages from the English novelists, and I was much struck by the superiority of Bennett's contribution over the work of specialists like Meredith and D. H. Lawrence. Bennett was not describing passion; but against his quiet exactitude and sincerity, the lyricists looked forced and trite. The very matter-of-factness of Bennett made him one of the best portrayers of women we have had. The vices of romanticism or of misogynist satire passed him by completely. What other words come to mind when we think of him? They are his own words: "detracting" is one, "chicane"—a great favourite—is another; but there is a sentence in the early pages of *The Clayhanger Family* which contains a volume of criticism on him. He is writing of young Edwin Clayhanger coming home from his last day at school in the Five Towns: "It seemed rather a shame," Bennett says of Edwin, "it seemed even tragic, that this naïve, simple creature, immaculate of worldly experience, must soon be transformed into a man wary, incredulous and detracting." The essence of Bennett's mind is packed into that awkward sentence with its crick in the neck at the feeble beginning and the giveaway of its three final words. Bennett had borrowed the manner and methods of the French naturalists without being seriously formed by the scientific and political ideas which made them naturalists and gave them their driving force. Timidity rather than conviction is behind the brevity of his address. The result is that the apostle of will, efficiency and success appears to us hesitant and uncertain; he is between two stools; he cannot make up his mind whether life is "rather a shame" or "tragic." And when you compare *The Clayhanger Family* with the contemporary French *Les Thibaults*—which, like *Clayhanger*, contains a prolonged study in fatal illness and is also concerned with the relation of father and son—you feel at once, though you recognise the conscious artist, Bennett's lack of imaginative stamina and resilience. What Bennett observes will be truthfully, almost litigiously, observed. Hazard will set the points wrongly in the lives of humdrum people and push them off the rails. Time will get its teeth into them more deeply year by year. We shall feel, as Edwin felt, that we must "brace ourselves to the exquisite burden of life." We shall feel we are interpenetrated "by the disastrous yet beautiful infelicity of things." What we shall miss is the sense that life is conceived of as anything in particular, whether it be the force that makes the Five Towns or forms the bleak impetuosity of Hilda Lessways. We shall not feel that life is much more than a random collection of *things*.

Admitting the absence of a frame, allowing for some lagging of narrative which the modern novelist would speed up, everything else in *Clayhanger* is good. Bennett, as I have said, was the connoisseur of the normal, the ordinary and the banal. Where other novelists add, he—as he said—detracted. For example, how easy for the novelist to identify himself with the sixteen-year-old Edwin and to exaggerate that sense of being alone with the universe which the boy had when he sat in his room alone at night. Bennett collects that emotion, astutely yet compassionately—but he collects it, labels it—it becomes part of the collection of human samples which make up Edwin Clayhanger's life. Bennett's pursuit of the normal is even better illustrated by his treatment of the character of the hard, impulsive, passionate figure of Hilda Lessways. Here he uses a characteristic device: he makes two full length portraits of her from two different points of view, a method which gives a remarkable suspense to the story. The first portrait of Hilda is romantic and mysterious outline. In the second, with enormous dramatic effect, he fills in the plain reality of her life. That second appearance of hers, as she cleans the house and quarrels with her mother about money, is an unforgettable portrayal of the relationship of two women. As spectators of Hilda's character we might easily exaggerate, romanticise and misread her disaster; but Bennett's gift as a novelist is to abolish the role of spectator. He almost painfully domesticates the reader, puts him in the slow muddle, murmur and diurnal perturbation of a character's life, so that the reader knows no more than Hilda knows, where she is going or why she is going there. Where most novelists live by a sort of instinct for imaginative scandal, Bennett—by some defect of imagination which he is able to turn to advantage—clings like a cautious Puritan to sober likelihood. He doesn't bet: "It's a mug's game." The result, in the portrait of Hilda, is a staggering probability. There is a passage when she discovers her husband is a bigamist and a crook, that the child she is expecting is illegitimate, and that she will be left penniless in their boarding house at the mercy of bailiffs. She is faced by ruin. How do people face ruin? Variously, unexpectedly; they traipse, protected by conviction, through their melodramas, Bennett seems to reply:

> Hilda in a curious way grew proud of him. With an extraordinary inconsequence she dwelt upon the fact that always grand—even as a caterer, he had caused to be printed at the foot of the menu forms which he had instituted, the words: "A second helping of all or any of the dishes will willingly be served if so desired." And in the general havoc of the shock she began to be proud also of herself because it was the mysterious power of her individuality that had originated her disaster.

The determination to avoid the dramatic has led to something far more dramatic: revelation, a new light on character, the unexpected vistas in ordinary life.

Bennett's characters have three dimensions; the slow but adroit changing of the light that is thrown upon them, makes them stereoscopic and gives them movement. And this movement is not the swift agitation of the passions but the dilatory adjustment to circumstance.

One of the reasons why most novels are bad is not that the characters do not live, but they do not live with one another. They read one another's minds through the author. In *Clayhanger* we feel at once that the characters are living together because, quite without prompting and entirely in the course of nature, they misunderstand one another. Edwin never understands his father because he does not know his father's past. The father cannot understand the son because the father's whole attitude to life is that his rise from barbarous poverty is a primitive miracle. He is primitive, the son is rational. Each one bumps awkwardly along in the wonder of his own nature. When the father is stricken by fatal illness the son becomes the tyrant. Their emotions about each other are strong; but the two men do not feel these emotions for each other at the same time. The fierceness of the father's battle for life in the long, grey death scene, startles the son—and yet he feels how strange it is that a dying man should be strong enough to return again and again to the struggle, whereas he, the son and slave, should be at the point of collapse. A writer with little poetic feeling, Bennett thinks of our awkwardness with each other, of the unbridgeable gaps of time, experience and faculty which separate us, and not of our ultimate isolation. That is why he is a pathetic and not a tragic writer; one who feels uncertainly that "it is rather a shame," that we have to bear time's burden of "beautiful infelicity."

Bennett's collector's passion for ordinariness is a kind of poor relation of Meredith's passion for the fantastic. It is amusing to make an irreverent comparison between Meredith's chapter *On an Aged and Great Wine* with Bennett's fervent hymn to building materials and plumbing in *Clayhanger*. This tedious literalness of Bennett's culminated in that nightmare of deified gadgets, *Imperial Palace*. But the virtues of Bennett lie in his patient and humane consideration of the normal factors of our lives: money, marriage, illness as we have to deal with them. Life he seems to say is an occupation which is forced upon us, not a journey we have chosen, nor a plunge we have taken. Such a view may at times depress us, but it may toughen us. Bennett really wrote out of the congenital tiredness of the lower middle class, as Wells wrote out of its gambling spirit and gift for fantasy; and in the end, I think, Bennett's picture, with its blank acceptance of the Sunday School pageants, the Jubilees, the Band of Hope, the fear of the workers, the half-baked attempts at culture, is the more lasting one. It is history. History presented—when we glance back at Bennett's French masters—with the dilettante's and collector's indifference to any theory of what history may be about.

V. S. Pritchett

THE WISE CONNOISSEUR

On Art and Connoisseurship. By Max Friedlander. With 40 illustrations. *Bruno Cassirer.* 21/-.

Connoisseurship, the art of telling when, where and by whom a picture was painted, is to the study of painting very much what textual criticism has been to the study of ancient literature. To the layman it must seem unnecessary to purify once more the text of Lucretius, still less that of an unimportant author like Manilius; and he may well wonder why scholars of the finest literary perception have given their lives to this unrewarding activity. The reason is that both connoisseurship and textual emendations do not depend on industry and ingenuity, but demand critical insight of a high order, and a sensibility which is sharpened, not blunted, by continual contact with concrete examples. In this admirable book Max Friedlander, the greatest living connoisseur of northern European painting, defines the function of the real expert as opposed to those greedy charlatans who have brought the term into disrepute. His decisions depend "not so much on the recollection of such and such an authenticated, signed or universally accepted work, as rather on an unconscious comparison of the picture to be ascribed with an ideal picture in his imagination. To gain, retain, refine and revise this ideal picture is the important thing and hence it is advisable to devote as much time as possible to the contemplation, in full enjoyment, of the best works by a master." He even claims ("rather recklessly") that the expert must learn to paint like the master, that is, to form the same visions as he. "This imaginary pupilage, which naturally has nothing to do with realisation, obtains for us the inner certainty with which we decide."

I have begun by speaking of Friedlander as a connoisseur, because it is his direct, first-hand experience, "in full enjoyment," of innumerable pictures which gives his book its peculiar value. His life has been made up of a vast number of judgments, interrelated, no doubt, but in a sense definite and complete in themselves. The habit of mind thus engendered is evident throughout this book. Compared to the usual study of æsthetics it lacks structure and development. No argument is sustained for more than a paragraph, and many of the most telling sentences could be removed from their contexts and planted elsewhere in the book without detriment. The author is well aware of this aphoristic turn of mind, and apologises for it in his final sentence. But no apology is needed when the aphorisms are fragments of experience chiselled by an unusually sharp and aristocratic intelligence, so that they will furnish the minds of scholars for a generation, serving both for use and ornament. Here are some examples. "Van Eyck's eye moved in front of a world at rest; Manet's eye rested in front of a world in motion." "The more truth to nature is offered, the greater are the claims for even more of such truth. Illusion resembles the god that consumes his own children." "The real theme of genre painting is condition, not event." "One must let them (works of art) speak, one must converse with them, but one must not interrogate them. To an inquisitor they refuse any information." These short sentences, however, do less than justice to Friedlander's qualities. His medium of expression is the paragraph; and many of his paragraphs would provide material for volumes by his more verbose colleagues, for Friedlander is both too quick-witted and too proud to indulge in the explanatory padding of which most books on art history are composed. His book should be read twice, not because he is an obscure stylist—on the contrary, he is one of the few Germans to write clearly—but because the mind easily wanders from pages which are closely packed with thought yet loosely connected with each other. This is particularly true of the early chapters dealing with the theory of art; later, when the author writes of his own metier and the tension of thought is relieved by a certain amount of indirect reminiscence, it is easier reading.

Friedlander's chapters on the function and problems of the connoisseur will hardly be surpassed, for few scholars will again have his opportunities of direct experience, and fewer still be able to view their experiences with a detached intelligence. His chief conclusion, already apparent in the quotations at the beginning of this review, is that connoisseurship is a matter of intuition. The connoisseur may "try to provide a basis for and strengthen his authority through the appearance of heavy intellectual work and laborious research since you may take credit for your industry, but not for your gifts, and many people like to take credit." But "one has the impression that his entire argument—lengthy, spasmodic, crowded with quotations—is just counsel's pleading, while the judge who condemns or acquits solely uses the word 'quality'." The reader is thus forced to turn back to the early chapters of the book to learn as much as he can about the basis of Friedlander's appreciation of art. If he has had a philosophic training he will soon find inconsistencies and critical judgments depending on conflicting theories of æsthetics; but if he is chiefly concerned with visual sensations and has attempted honestly to analyse them, then every time he reads these chapters he will be more than ever struck by their wisdom and sincerity.

It remains to be said that although certain passages appeared in the author's *Echt und Unecht*, this is substantially a new work, making its first appearance in an excellent English translation. The illustrations are disappointing and, as the author realised, unnecessary; no doubt the publishers thought otherwise, but if the book sells I hope they will contrive to print it in a cheap, unillustrated edition, as many people now want to read about painting and writers of Friedlander's distinction are rare.

Kenneth Clark

CO-OPERATIVE RESEARCH

The Social Life of a Modern Community. By W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt. *Oxford University Press.* 24*s*.

This is the first volume of a series, eventually to be six, in which the authors set out to describe the habits of a small New England town. With a staff of thirty they lived there long enough to collect information about almost every aspect of its life. Income levels, housing, occupations, religious differences, races and their habits, the books and newspapers read, the influence of church and school, even the social ambitions of the different classes, were charted and tabulated. Mr. Warner, who is an anthropologist, with experience of research among Australian aborigines, has set out to do for his New England town what he sought to do in his field-work in the Antipodes.

The zeal and the devotion that have gone into the inquiry are beyond all question; the reader is left almost breathless with admiration at the way in which everything capable of reduction to the card-index system is so reduced. Yet it must be frankly said that the result does not seem to justify the immensity of the labour involved. A careful student of the Lynds' *Middletown* would have a much clearer picture of that mid-Western city than this elaborate investigation affords; and, if he asks for the meaning of it all, I am inclined to say that from Sinclair Lewis and Meyer Levin, from John Steinbeck and J. P. Marquand, far more insight is to be obtained. Indeed, it is significant that by far the most illuminating part of the book is the eighth chapter in which a series of social types are sketched almost in the novelists' manner. All this elaboration does not give us the answers to any of the questions we are continually tempted to ask. That old New England families are proud; that more people read the Boston *American* than read the Boston *Transcript*; that the pursuit of the right clubs by the parvenu is relentless and determined; that negroes tend to have the worst houses; that people live in better houses the higher their income; that race in the United States is pretty closely related to the chance of continuous employment; that people tend to own more property as they grow older; that more money is spent on sporting equipment by the rich than by the poor; all this, I suspect, could have been pretty fully known without the need of a vast expenditure in providing a statistical elaboration of the obvious.

Professor R. G. Collingwood, in his fascinating *Autobiography* has remarked that if you want the right answers you must ask the right questions first. The difficulty with this survey is that it does not concentrate upon any vital questions. It asks them all, good and bad and indifferent, in the optimistic belief that the more facts we have the more knowledge we possess. But the real problems of social science turn on the framework of values within which the facts collected are to be set. When one has gone through all the elaborate charts and tables which, with loving zeal, Mr. Warner and his team have arrayed, one has neither material for judgment nor a formula for action. It is, of course, very useful to have an anatomy of a New England town; but the purpose of an anatomy is a guide to health. When Mr. and Mrs. Lynd studied *Middletown*, when Mr. Rowntree studied York, they emerged with a sense of things to be done, and effort to be made; the analysis was also a programme because the authors had a scheme of values by which they measured the relevance of what they were reporting. The reader of Mr. Marquand's *Henry Pulham, Esquire*, knows much more fully than the reader of this survey what is happening on the fringes of Bostonian Brahimism; the reader of Mr. Steinbeck's epic feels that he can approach the issue of the migrants from the dustbowl with a power to grasp its essentials far greater than he grasps from this survey the problems of this New England town.

One is tempted to argue that the faith of the social scientist in co-operative research of this kind has become an excessive luxury not justified by its results. Mr. Warner and his collaborators have photographed the corpse, like good detectives, in every conceivable position and from every possible angle. But after all their immense labours, they have given us no clue to the murderer. It is to know who committed the crime that one reads a detective story. Perhaps the *dénouement* is reserved for the sixth volume. If so, I hope the authors will remember that life is as short as action is important.

Harold J. Laski

MUSIC AFTER THE WAR

Philharmonic. By Thomas Russell. *Hutchinson.* 7*s*. 6*d*.

Full Orchestra. By Frank Howes. *Secker and Warburg.* 6*s*.

If you have spent the greater part of the war in remote canteens and messes, with the radio always full on, irretrievably glued to the Forces programme and emitting an unheeded roar of cinema organ, "Very tasty; Very sweet," little-announcer-jokes-about-nothing, Vera Lynn, the Feudal Sextet, the Plantagenet Octet and Old Mother Riley, it is difficult to grasp the fact that somewhere just round the corner, where you can't see it, a revolution is taking place in the musical tastes of the people. And yet so it is; accounts from all over the country are now confirmed by a man exceptionally qualified to judge of the new public appetite for orchestral music. "I assert with confidence," says Mr. Russell, leading violinist and war-time manager of the London Philharmonic, "that there is a public in Great Britain large enough, or potentially large enough, to keep at least six full symphony orchestras in continuous employment for eleven months of the year." Much of his new book is concerned with the financial and administrative background of our public music, and should interest circles wider than the musicians'. Fascinating though the orchestral gossip may be—delightful though it is to learn, for instance, that 'cellists are inclined to be dressy or that the heavier brass are mostly ex-servicemen and seldom teetotal—the importance of *Philharmonic* lies in the unique administrative experience of its author.

Memories are short, and it will do no harm to recall the wartime vicissitudes of the L.P.O. In September 1939 it faced extinction, reconstructed itself on a self-owning basis under a soviet of its own musicians, and struggled gamely through the black-out, the blitz and the loss of many of its instruments in the ruin of Queen's Hall. Twice in 1940 the end seemed near; first Beecham, then Priestley, launched appeals, frankly admitted the danger, and revealed the unexpected fact that thousands of people in England cared desperately whether the L.P.O. survived or not, and were prepared to prove it. Decentralisation, forced on all musicians by the blitz, meant that thousands were hearing symphonic music for the first time and demanding more; in the blitzed towns, to quote Mr. Priestley, "often the music arrived not long after the soup." In all these heroic proceedings Mr. Russell played a leading part and it will occur to many that honours are often awarded for less; of course even that cheap gesture did not suggest itself to our rulers. Not a penny reached the

L.P.O. from any government department, unless you count the B.B.C., who accorded them in the whole of 1940 just thirteen broadcasts. On top of this, when in early 1941 the musicians of the London orchestras, exhausted with constant touring under war conditions, felt compelled to demand a higher rate of recording fees and a limitation to the number of master records to be made at one session, the recording companies were scandalised and retaliated by a complete cessation of symphonic recording in London.

Now here is the point: if, in face of all this, and helped only by a little private charity, the L.P.O. has not only survived but maintained to an astonishing degree its old standards, how much would it take after the war to guarantee the future of Mr. Russell's six orchestras, provide a pension scheme, and generally put the provision of public music throughout the country on a sound and honourable footing? Granted good organisation and good new halls (an absolute necessity, this) very little according to Mr. Russell: "let us say, ten minutes of present war-time expenditure as an annual grant to all these orchestras together." Since one of the valuable results of this war has been to cast universal discredit on the "does it pay?" criterion, it is quite possible that the orchestras may get their subsidy. Who, then, would call the tune? Mr. Russell is very suspicious of government control and dreads, as well he may, a Ministry of Fine Arts. But merely to avoid competitive chaos, some form of ministerial control seems inevitable. What is wanted, surely, is something broader and less rarified: a Ministry of Public Amenities, to look after the common interest in such matters as preservation of the countryside, provision of swimming-pools, sports grounds, cafés, riverside restaurants, theatres, bands, open-air shows of all sorts: all that warm and gay side of life which we all love when we encounter it in Copenhagen or in Budapest, and have always managed so poorly at home. The Minister? No need to think twice; whatever your view of his talents for politics in general, Mr. Priestley was cast by nature for this rôle.

To return to music. Mr. Russell suggests that it is only the confusion and inadequacy of our musical organisations that make us appear musically inferior to others, in particular to the Germans. I think myself this goes too far. Anyone who has marched with an average English conscript unit will have had our musical slow-wittedness forced on his attention as soon as the singing begins: the lack of rhythmic sense, the inability to choose a suitable tune, to start at a practicable pitch or to make the downbeat come on the left foot; most common of all, the tendency to come in a beat too early after a silent bar. Now when did we acquire this rhythmic dullness, which was certainly not one of our characteristics under the Tudors? Probably during the musically disastrous nineteenth century, when the oratorios of Mendelssohn and their still flabbier imitations set the tone of all serious music in England, and devitalised it for generations. Even to-day "good music" for the millions means the square trudging sequences of *The Lost Chord*, Stainer's *Crucifixion*, and the pallid flutings of the choirboy. With all its ancient virtues, the ecclesiastical tradition has had, I believe, a strangling effect on our musical life, and certainly an all-powerful one: the heads of our principal Schools of Music, for example are almost invariably organists. English music lacks red blood; it needs just that vitality and passion which are inseparable from the orchestra and the opera; and, opera being demonstrably alien to our temperament, the new interest in symphonic music is all the more welcome.

It is to cater for this interest that Mr. Frank Howes has written his *Full Orchestra*. This little book makes a perfect introduction to its subject: the author does not delude himself by the avoidance of technical terms, or lure others into the belief that one can grasp symphonic structure without an understanding (whether instinctive or acquired) of key-relationship, the heart of the whole business. He describes the evolution of the modern orchestra, considers each instrument in turn, discusses conductors, and takes us on a Cook's tour, full of wise comment, through the standard repertory. His descriptions are always happy, as when he speaks of the tone "at once voluptuous and hard-faced" of the saxophone. An ideal book for the school library, and one which I admire so much that Mr. Howes will forgive me for ending with a few small objections. He is far too good a musician to repeat that old *canard* about the one-note triangle part in the *Meistersinger* Prelude. "Bohemian amiability" is not enough for the best of all 'cello concertos, Dvorak's. And there is that oboe concerto of Mozart which he mentions more than once; what evidence has Mr. Howes for the existence of such a work? I wish, too, that when discussing the immortal clarinet quintets of Mozart and Brahms he had mentioned Bliss's exquisite work, not quite unworthy of that company.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

THE SWEET-SCENTED MANUSCRIPT

Bright Morning. By CONSTANCE SITWELL. *Cape.* 5*s.*

Common or Garden Child. By M. ST. CLARE. BYRNE. *Faber.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The recollections of childhood and youth published in recent times have done much to convince me that people who were born in the last century and passed the formative years of life in the Edwardian era were not at all unfortunate. The idea that they were less intelligently and humanely brought up than the children of this age, and suffered from many Victorian taboos has been encouraged for a great number of years by writers of novels and autobiographies who blame their parents and parsons and teachers for all that went wrong with them when they grew up. The doctrine of original sin having been rejected, the harsh and stupid behaviour of these adults is a handy scapegoat. These miserable tales of repression and frustration have made malodorous an apter adjective for the manuscript of youth than Fitzgerald's "sweet-scented." But they have had their day. Writers have come up who seem to have the happiest memories of the morning of their lives. It may be that it seems all the brighter to them because in the afternoon the skies have become so infernally dark.

Constance Sitwell's recollections, like Lady Carbery's *Happy World*, which I warmly recommended here a few months ago, is based on diaries she kept in childhood and adolescence, but she has not attempted to emulate Lady Carbery's feat of writing about things past as if they had not ceased to be. She has transcribed very little from her diaries, using them chiefly as an aid to memory. They have served her well, but not so evocatively as flowers. "When I thought, half in fun, of writing down the distinct memories of other years, I found that they were mostly linked to, and remembered by, flowers." So the first eight years of her life in Ceylon where she was born are associated with the Arum lilies thick in the ditches, with the ivory Trumpet flower in the garden, with the Morning Glory climbing over the fences along the railway line, with the yellow and scarlet Cannas "level with our heads," with the velvet trumpets of the Amaryllis. Later, after her return to England, she visits Renishaw, Sir George Sitwell's house near Chesterfield. ("Little did I imagine then that I should ever be connected with that family by marriage.") That visit is linked in memory

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with the tall pink and sulphur hollyhocks which made " Sachy " a little boy then, look very small indeed in his grey flannel suit, with the pearly beauties of the water-lilies Osbert dragged up by their long cold stalks when they went sailing on the lake, with the tube-roses Lady Ida always had in her boudoir. " Perhaps it will be only to those to whom the subtle and marvellous forms of flowers, the scents and fragrancies of flowers seem important that these light chapters will have any appeal." A modest reflection from a writer who in her personal story has brought to vivid life a world which has vanished. She writes with exquisite sensitiveness about other things than flowers. Her sketches of the Brownlows are not inferior to her finished painting of stately Ashridge with its enormous garden. " It all seemed a little overwhelming to me after our house in the middle of a village where we had our friends so near at hand. I thought of its companionableness with longing sometimes, especially at night when we went to bed, having said good-night to the elders, robed in dignity and black crepe, and left them reading in what seemed to us a rather dreary silence in the library, lit only by pools of light near their chairs." Mrs. Sitwell found herself in a very different environment when she went to stay with her Bishop cousin, Edward Talbot, at Kennington. Her memory of that visit is linked, not with flowers, but with Chesterton's loud laugh. " Christianity," she says, " seemed to envelop everything for G.K.C." Chary of anecdotes, she tells one of him, which ought to make the Catholic deplore more than ever the loss of such a brilliant and merry champion of the faith.

After Mrs. Sitwell's admirably composed narrative, *Common or Garden Child* struck me as more chaotic than perhaps it is. The author describes it as an attempt, renewed at intervals over twenty years, " to revive the experience of life of a small person, early in this century "— a small person whom she considers in a way extraordinary as the title of the book indicates. The attempt led her to the conclusion that there is a half world of remembrance, not directly apprehended by the child, " but only through the intermediary that is oneself at a later-earlier age. And by way of this self-relayed, indirect apprehension one can sometimes be led back to disconnected items belonging to an earlier direct self-apprehension." I attribute to this theory of how memory of childhood works the lack of any chronological sequence in Miss St. Clare Byrne's story of her first fourteen years. We are never sure what age she was when she had the experiences described. And were they really what the adult intermediary would have us believe ?

Besides scorning dates, the intermediary scorns background. We are left in ignorance about the antecedents of the child. We are not told where she lived, or what was the social position of her family ; though there are implications that her home was in a famous port, and that her grandfather was a ship-designer. My experience of the theatre has taught me that an audience does not care two hoots what happens to people in a play if the dramatist has not made clear who they are. I should have been much more interested in this common or garden child if I could have placed her. Still I am grateful for many amusing pages, particularly for those in which the child sums up the advantages of men over those " ladies" she distrusts and dislikes.

CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

An Outline of Political Geography. By J. F. HORRABIN. *N.C.L.C. Publishing Co.* 4*s*. 6*d*.

Horrabin's " Atlas-History of the Second Great War," Volume 5. July, 1941 to January, 1942. *Nelson* 3*s*. 6*d*.

Geographers are not necessarily good politicians— one of the most brilliant modern students of Geographic Environment, Ellen C. Semple, often quoted by J. F. Horrabin in his *Outline of Political Geography*, is an example. But there is no doubt that all politicians are improved by a knowledge of geography and may avoid some of the stupidities of Mr. Lloyd George in the Peace Settlement and Mr. Neville Chamberlain in more recent times. Mr. Horrabin has described the gradual progress towards world economic independence during the centuries—" from river valleys to the coast of an inland sea, thence to the ocean coasts of the world, and finally into the heart of all the continents." On this analysis, based on the interplay of geography and history, he describes and illustrates the history of the world in perspective which is essential for the planning of the post-war period. In fact we might all feel a little happier about a peace settlement if we could make its participants study carefully this valuable survey of the forces up the pattern of world affairs.

In the second book, Mr. Horrabin tells us in word, and again in those brilliant simple maps which we have learnt to expect from him, the events in Europe since June 22nd, 1941, when Germany attacked the Soviet Union, and in Asia since Dec. 7th, 1941, when Japan made her spectacular coup in the Pacific. They make intelligible at a glance the articles in our newspapers and in B.B.C. communiques.

Horizon. JUNE. 1*s*. 6*d*.

Much food for thought. Mr. Koestler on the opposite philosophies of the Yogi and the Commissar is far more interesting than Mr. Borkenau on Sorel, Pareto and Spengler ; but one is a little overwhelmed by *two* articles revealing the German gusto for abstractions. Mr. Peter Quennell writes with lucidity and great acumen about Gide, and the *Imaginary Interviews* written by Gide and published in the *Figaro* are admirable. Mr. Stephen Spender's attack on reviewers of poetry is spirited, if a little prejudiced. (Who could ever attack Keats's poetry as " self-centred " ?) Mr. Ajit Mookerjee reveals a remarkable school of Indian folk-painters, with curious illustrations. Mr. Sinclair-Loutit delivers a fine assault on our medical system. The editorial comment includes a witty questionnaire for Fascists.

Horizon now is established as the one monthly that is lively, cosmopolitan and discriminating.

" Peace Aims," Pamphlets

The National Peace Council has now produced Nos. 12, 13 and 14 of its " Peace Aims " series. They are admirably produced, but expensive. *Britain and Russia, The Future* (N.P.C., 39 Victoria Street, 1*s*. 3*d*.) is a record of the speeches made at a Conference in London last April. Speakers include Lord Horder, Professor MacMurray, Maurice Dobb, H. H. Elvin, Middleton Murray, H. J. Laski and Andrew Rothstein. Several of the speeches are of unusual interest and the clash between the Communist, Christian and Liberal views is not too much disguised by the common recognition of the need for the best obtainable collaboration between the two nations. The oddest incident is the anger of Mr. Rothstein, the redoubtable representative of Tass, because Mr. Laski stated the Marxian platitude that there must be difficulties about collaboration between capitalist Britain and the Soviet Union. *Food Relief for Occupied Europe* (9*d*.) is also the record of a discussion. Those whose consciences are alive to the horrors of blockade will read with great interest the explanation of official policy put forward by Mr. Dingle Foot, M.P., Under-Secretary for the Ministry of Economic Warfare and the subsequent discussion of the possibilities and limitations of sending food to starving Greece, to Belgium, and other countries. *India*, 1939-42 (6*d*.) is " a summary of events up to and including the Cripps mission." It contains a shortened form of the White Paper and a survey of Indian events from the beginning of the war up to the Cripps visit.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 647

Set by Germaine Necker

Despite Miss Rose Macaulay, the notion prevails that men behave and feel differently from women, at least in contemporary England. A first prize of two guineas and a second prize of half-a-guinea are offered for the best aphorisms upon this supposed difference as shown in three of the following characters: The Bore, the Puritan, the Hypochondriac, the Optimist, the Pessimist, the Busybody, the Animal-Lover, the Rake, the Dandy, the Politician.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, July 6th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 644

Set by William Whitebait

Writers are fond of imagining that they could have achieved success in other walks of life. Mr. Desmond MacCarthy has recently informed us that he would have made the perfect butler. Competitors are asked to guess the alternative careers of one of the following: Henry James, "Erewhon" Butler, De Quincey, Proust, Shelley, James Joyce, Wordsworth, Jane Austen, Baudelaire, Gibbon, Oscar Wilde; and to give, in the author's own words, reasons for his choice. Limit 200 words.

Report by William Whitebait

The natural alternative careers seem to me as follows: Henry James, Cook's Guide in France and Italy; Butler, secretary or librarian to a bishop; De Quincey, copywriter of advertisements for patent medicines; Proust, Oxford don; Shelley, pilot-officer; James Joyce, hairdresser; Wordsworth, shepherd; Jane Austen, marriage broker; Baudelaire, drug pedlar; Gibbon, Pope of Rome; Oscar Wilde, actor. Most of these were provided by competitors, though Butler, De Quincey, James Joyce, Proust and Baudelaire had fewer supporters than they deserved. On the other hand, Jane Austen was allowed a safe field ranging from lady's maid to headmistress of a school for the daughters of gentlefolk, and Wordsworth had the choice of being a tramp, a shepherd, a journalist, a house-agent, a landscape painter, a herbalist, a guide to the Lakes and, yes, a clergyman. All the suggested Wordsworth careers appeared to me possible and I should like to add to them the occupation of umpire at cricket. But Gibbon was the hero of this competition; he was the only writer on the list to whom *success* was instinctively attributed. G. de Vavasour's "Gibbon as Pope" is convincing as well as brilliant, and the arguments for his being a successful general, a sculptor of monumental works an deven a supreme highwayman are almost as strong.

I recommend that the prizes be equally divided between G. de Vavasour, F. C. C., R. P. Legville and Towambucket, each of whom has combined wit and ingenuity with a sense of what is probable.

PRIZES

GIBBON AS POPE

My temper is no more susceptible of regret for the past than of enthusiasm for the future, but had fortune offered me the choice I cannot deny that I should have found the office of Pope congenial for several exquisite reasons. This admission may be received with no little astonishment by those who are aware of the indolence of my humour and my early disentanglement from the sophistry that once seduced my youthful understanding. Yet consider that the Head of the Church of Rome is no man's rival; he may repose on his achievement neither elated by ambition of future fame, nor depressed by the apprehension of contempt. He may have the satisfaction of reprobating in his closet what he ordains in his cathedral, while preventing the danger of exposing an old superstition to a blind and fanatic multitude. Matrimony I do not desire; a wish to settle in my native land I have never entertained; and what seat could be more desirable than the *eternal city*? Nor should I overlook the assurance of that first of earthly blessings—*pecuniary independence*—a secure result of grafting one's consequence on a great professional body, and among the most formidable arguments for the guardianship of the milk-white hind.

(G. DE VAVASOUR)

LINES COMPOSED IN PIOUS SELF-CONGRATULATION ON A WELL-CHOSEN WALK OF LIFE

By Wm. Wordsworth, House-agent

From infancy a friend of Nature, I
Have loved a cottage under its own sky,
Or lonely farm, nor shall my muse let pass
The gray stone villa of the middle class,
Nor rectory, embowered in laurel shrubs,
Or boarding-house that hath geraniums in tubs.

Even the commodious mansions of the great
Were dear; and when I grew to man's estate,
To house the houseless—this, my spirit said,
Should be my solace and my daily bread.
So now I spend my days in decent pride,
Most noted house-agent in smiling Ambleside.
Full many a client have I speeded hence
To his well-timbered bijou residence;
And when my tenants flit at peep of dawn,
How strictly is my inventory drawn:
How sweet, as on my evening couch I lie,
To know that not one egg-spoon has escaped my eye!

(F. C. C.)

ALTERNATIVE CAREER OF BAUDELAIRE

LA VENGEANCE

Mon métier est : chasseur au Café de la Paix.
Aux liqueurs, aux parfums et aux femmes je fais
Tout un cortège, le soir, d'ivresse divine
En vendant de l'opium et de la cocaïne.

Femmes, vous priserez, pour noyer ma rancoeur,
La blanche cocaïne ; et de l'opium vainqueur
Vous subirez la dent, déchirante magie,
Dans une engourdissante et lumineuse orgie.

La griffe de l'opium tyrannique et mutin
Me vengera dès lors de votre amour stérile,
Vous qui m'avez laissé vierge, avide et débile,
Quand l'ardeur m'élançait vers le ciel, au matin.

Il vous faudra fumer ! fumer plutôt que vivre !
Et les rêves cuisants, plus profonds que la mort,
Que je vous vends, le soir, au café, sans remord,
Dévoreront vos corps polis comme le cuivre ;

Car je vends de l'opium et de la cocaïne,
Tout en étant chasseur au Café de la Paix.
Aux liqueurs, aux parfums et aux femmes je fais
Un cortège maudit, mais d'essence divine.

(R. P. LEGVILLE)

JANE AUSTEN MIGHT HAVE CONDUCTED A MATRIMONIAL AGENCY

My dear Cassandra,

You are quite right. It would be most improper to interfere in M.'s business. To be sure, *that* was never my intention, though I own the temptation is strong. I feel that such a partnership will not do. *She* should marry H. and *he* should not marry at all. I have quite settled this to my own satisfaction, having an instinct in these matters. You know, I sometimes think I could have been useful in one of these odd, sensible sort of countries where marriages are arranged. Think of me, a little plumper, in a sober, matronly kind of black gown, receiving parents discreetly and bestowing on them the benefits of my intuition in projects of matrimonial alliance. Could Y., with a clubfoot, ask more than £5,000 with C., a handsome young lady, with a pretty figure? Is it wise to force J. on D., who are mutually distasteful, to round off an estate? The parents' gratitude for my advice would be expressed in a small purse of gold unobtrusively left behind. What is your opinion? Shall I begin to learn Turkish? . . . (TOWANBUCKET)

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